TUESDAY
February 24, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
18 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 57 • No. 46

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

To subscribe, give a missed call at 9828331787 or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

TRADE TALKS

Canadian PM to arrive in India on Feb. 27

NEWS » PAGE 10

CASE IN SC

'We don't share data with Meta': WhatsApp

NEWS » PAGE 12

IDFC FIRST FRAUD

Staff plotted with outsiders: Bank CEO

BUSINESS » PAGE 13

STRATEGIC ADOPTION

Energy shift through green ammonia

India's approach can shape global standards

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

CALYPSO TIME

Hetmyer on song as WI crushes Zimbabwe

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

'State contributes one-fifth to India's bioeconomy'

BENGALURU
Karnataka's bioeconomy, a $39 billion enterprise, contributes over one-fifth to the national bioeconomy and over 10% to the Gross State Domestic Product as of 2025, said a newly launched report. » PAGE 6

City gets Asia's second largest Amazon office

BENGALURU
Amazon, a Seattle-based technology, e-commerce and cloud computing firm, has opened its second largest corporate office in Asia at Kattigenahalli on the outskirts of Bengaluru on Monday.

» PAGE 4

Centre unveils policy to tackle terrorism threats

PRAHAAR states that India faces terrorist threats on all three fronts — water, land and air; the policy adds that capacities have been developed to protect critical sectors of the economy

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Monday released the country's first-ever anti-terror policy, emphasising that other than terror sponsored from across the border, "criminal hackers and nation states continue to target India through cyber-attacks".

The policy – titled PRAHAAR – has been uploaded on the Ministry's website.

It states that India faces terrorist threats on all three fronts – water, land and air – and that capacities have been developed to protect critical sectors of the economy, including power, railways, aviation, ports, defence, space and atomic energy, from both state and non-state actors.

The Hindu first reported on December 23, 2025, that the National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy had been finalised and would be released soon. The policy underlines that "India does not link terrorism to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation". However, it notes that India has been affected by "sponsored terrorism" from across the border, with "Jihadi terror outfits as well as their frontal organisations" continuing to plan, coordinate, facilitate and execute terror attacks. "India has been on the target of global terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and IS, which have been trying to incite violence in the country through sleeper cells," it says, adding that extremists operating from foreign countries have hatched conspiracies to promote terrorism.

"Their handlers from across the border frequently use the latest technologies, including the use of drones, for facilitating terror-related activities and attacks in Punjab and J&K. Increasingly, terrorist groups are engaging organised criminal networks for logistics and recruitment to execute and facilitate terror strikes in India," the policy says.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Protection plan

India has released its first-ever National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy, PRAHAAR

Assessing threats: India has been affected by 'sponsored terrorism,' the policy says.

- The nine-page document details the threat-profile, counter-terrorism strategy and the way forward
- It lists key agencies responsible for specific tasks
- It stresses that terrorism is not linked to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation

Four die after consuming 'adulterated milk' in A.P.

T. Appala Naidu
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

Four elderly persons have died from acute renal failure after consuming adulterated milk in Rajamahendravaram City in Andhra Pradesh, the East Godavari district administration said on Monday.

Officials said 12 people, including the dead, had taken ill after consuming the milk. Eight victims are suffering from anuria (absence of urine), and are undergoing treatment. Three of them are children aged below four and are critical, said doctors.

East Godavari District Collector Kirthi Chekuri said the victims consumed milk supplied by the same vendor, Addala Ganeswara Rao. The vendor, who procured milk from 46 dairy farmers and supplied to 106 families, has been detained.

"All the 12 persons are from Swaroop Nagar and Chowdeswari Nagar areas of Rajamahendravaram," Ms. Kirthi said.

"People in the age group of 50-70 and those below five years are prone to anuria. A State-level expert team has collected blood samples from 73 families who consumed milk supplied by the vendor. The samples have been sent to the forensic laboratory for tests," she said. Experts have also collected the fodder given to the cattle for tests, she said.

Superintendent of Police D. Narasimha Kishore said post-mortem reports, which are awaited, will establish the reasons that caused anuria and acute renal failure.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu announced an *ex gratia* of ₹10 lakh each for the families of the dead.

Former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy alleged that negligence in enforcing food safety norms has endangered public lives and demanded strict action.

Tragic incident: A health official collecting blood sample from a person who consumed milk supplied by the vendor. PTI

Air ambulance with seven aboard crashes in Jharkhand forest

Press Trust of India
RANCHI

A Delhi-bound air ambulance carrying seven persons crashed in a forest near Simaria in Chatra district of Jharkhand on Monday, Ranchi airport Director Vinod Kumar said.

Search and rescue teams have been dispatched, but there was no immediate confirmation about casualties, officials said. The crash occurred after the air ambulance took off from the Ranchi airport at 7.10 p.m.

The ambulance had lost contact with air traffic control around 20 minutes after take off.

Inclement weather could be a reason for the crash, but the actual reason would be ascertained only after a probe, Mr. Kumar added.

An Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) team is being dispatched for investigation.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Wreckage of the air ambulance after it crashed near Simaria in Chatra district of Jharkhand. PTI

Paws and petals

In full bloom: A dog at the Tulip Festival 2026 organised by the New Delhi Municipal Council at Shanti Path in the national capital on Monday. The exhibition will be open throughout February for the public. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Remark on *Kantara*: Ranveer Singh moves HC against FIR

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh has moved the High Court of Karnataka questioning the first information report (FIR) registered against him by the Bengaluru City Police on the direction of a metropolitan magistrate court for allegedly hurting the religious sentiments by his act of "mocking" the sacred *daiva* tradition portrayed in the Kannada film *Kantara Chapter 1*.

Hearing today

The actor's petition has been listed for hearing on Tuesday.

Complainant Prashanth Metha, a city-based advocate, had approached the magistrate court after the city police did not act on his complaint against the actor.

Mimics actor

Ranveer Singh, during the closing ceremony of International Film Festival of Goa (IFFI)-2025 in Goa on November 28, 2025, had on the stage mimiced actor Rishab Shetty's performance in the climax of the film, while calling the revered *daiva Chavundi of* coastal Karnataka as "female ghost".

However, the actor on December 1, 2025, on Instagram apologised for his action while clarifying that he did not mean to hurt anyone's sentiments but appreciate Rishab Shetty's performance in the film.

25 troops killed as violence erupts in Mexico after Army kills cartel leader

Agence France-Presse
GUADALAJARA

Twenty-five Mexican troops died in clashes with cartel gunmen following a raid that led to the death of the country's most-wanted drug lord, a top security official said on Monday.

Nemesio 'El Mencho' Oseguera, leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, was wounded in a clash with soldiers in the town of Tapalpa, in Jalisco State, and died while being flown to Mexico City, the Army said on Sunday. He had a $15 million U.S. bounty on his head.

News of his death triggered cartel members across the country to block roads, torch vehicles and businesses, and send fearful residents into hiding.

Security Secretary Omar Garcia Harfuch said that apart from the 25 National Guard members, a prison guard, a member of the state prosecutor's office, and 30 suspected members of Oseguera's criminal organisation were killed in the clashes.

The streets of the State capital Guadalajara were almost empty as stores, pharmacies and gas stations shut down. The violence spread to the neighbouring Michoacan, where the cartel has a presence, and gripped the resort city of Puerto Vallarta.

The Indian Embassy in Mexico on Monday issued an advisory to Indian nationals residing in the country, urging them to exercise caution and remain indoors amid escalating violence.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Conflict zone: A bus set on fire by organised crime groups in Zapopan, Mexico, on Sunday. AFP

Crowd control: SOP will be in force till law is enacted, says High Court

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Monday directed that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Crowd Control and Mass Gathering Management, which was submitted to the court by the State government incorporating suggestions from *amicus curiae* and others, would be enforced and operated till the government comes with a law for crowd management.

A Division Bench, comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C.M. Poonacha, issued the direction while disposing of the PIL petition, which was *suo motu* initiated by the court on the issue of stampede that occurred outside the M. Chinnaswamy stadium on June 4, 2025, which claimed 11 lives.

However, the court gave liberty to Senior Advocate S. Susheela, who was appointed as *amicus curiae* in the petition, to renew the petition if the need arose in the future.

The Bench closed the proceedings on the petition after the Advocate-General K. Shashi Kiran Shetty informed it that the Home Department had forwarded the SOP to the Secretary of the Legislative Assembly to place it before the scrutiny committee of the Assembly for reviewing the SOP along with the proposed Karnataka Crowd Control (Managing Crowd at Events and place of Gathering) Bill, 2025.

CONTINUD ON » PAGE 2

A stampede outside the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on June 4, 2025, claimed 11 lives. K. MURALI KUMAR

The Axar conundrum — to be or not to be

He is a no-fuss individual with a ready smile, willing and able to perform any task he is asked to undertake; expectations were that he would take his appointed place for the Super Eight fixture against South Africa but the jinx of the vice-captaincy seemed to take him down as well

R. Kaushik
AHMEDABAD

There was a phase in the 1980s when the vice-captaincy of the Australian Test side was the least coveted position. Technically, the vice-captain is a bit of a ceremonial appointment until the designated leader is ruled out due to injury. In so many ways, the deputy is the conduit between the captain and the boys, the via medium that is a seasoned player but is still approachable for the young guns who might harbour inhibitions about going straight to the skipper for one reason or the other.

Andrew Hilditch, Ray Bright and David Hookes were all vice-captains who lost their places in the Test squad not too long into their roles. Things came to such a pass that the vice-captaincy was looked at askance; players were happy not to be considered for that position, though clearly, things have come a long way since then.

It would seem as if the vice-captaincy of the Indian Twenty20 International side currently mirrors what used to be in Australia some four decades ago. Towards the middle of last year, India's selectors pulled Shubman Gill out of 20-over hibernation and appointed him Suryakumar Yadav's deputy. The then 25-year-old hadn't featured in a T20I for more than 13 months but taken in by his glorious run in England last summer when he amassed 754 runs in his first Test series as captain and perhaps looking at him as a future all-format skipper, they brought him back into the mix for the T20 Asia Cup in the UAE, ostensibly waiting for the ongoing World Cup to end before naming him Suryakumar's replacement in the hot seat.

That experiment went horribly wrong. Gill couldn't slot back into the T20 squad with any degree of comfort or consistency. The rejig that his return to the top of the order necessitated eventually cost Sanju Samson his place in the XI, while Gill himself floundered and stuttered. Fifteen innings between September and December yielded two 40s and a third knock in the 30s, but his inconsistencies and the inability to adhere to the team plans that revolved around making the most of the PowerPlay compelled the decision-makers to, belatedly, beat a hasty retreat and dump him from their World Cup plans.

Double-edged sword

The double-edged vice-captaincy sword was then passed on to Axar Patel, who had performed that role previously too. Axar has been around for a long time, is well-liked and, beneath that gentle exterior, possesses an astute cricket brain and a steely resolve that has helped him tide over many a crisis. His captaincy chops have been honed at Delhi Capitals, whom he has led with aplomb if not the greatest success, while his uncomplicated approach to batting and bowling, allied with his deceptive and underrated fielding, make him a dream pick in any T20 team.

Axar is a no-fuss individual with a ready smile, willing and able to perform any task he is asked to undertake. Rohit Sharma and Rahul Dravid used him as a

Against South Africa, there was a pressing need to bring Axar back into the mix, given the magnitude of the occasion and his immense experience

floater at the corresponding tournament in 2024, and Axar's value with the bat manifested itself gloriously in the final when he was pushed up to No. 5 to partner Virat Kohli after India lost Rohit, Rishabh Pant and Suryakumar with not many on the board.

Kohli took his time, maybe a little too much time, to hit his straps after a promising start devolved into a middle-overs struggle, while Axar got on the bike and sped away to ensure that there was no tangible loss of momentum. Using his smarts and his mastery of spin, he picked off four sixes, including a magnificent straight hit off Kagiso Rabada, on his way to 47 off 31 deliveries. His innings was cut short in full flow by a run-out, but he had provided the cushion when Kohli was anchoring the innings, upon which Shivam Dube and Kohli himself, finally, built to take India to what eventually turned out to be a title-winning total.

Axar's left-handed batting pyrotechnics were complemented by his left-arm spin, seemingly innocuous and unthreatening but always a potent weapon simply because he seldom leaves the stumps. Axar has no pretensions to being a prodigious turner of the ball; he does just enough to catch the outside edge or beat the inside half, and what he doesn't have by way of turn is more than compensated for with his accuracy, his variations of pace and his clever, subtle changes of release points. Sometimes, he goes round-arm to get skid, at other times, he tosses the ball up that much more to procure a modicum of turn.

At the last World Cup, he was an absolute bank with the ball. Coming into the final, he had eight wickets in seven matches and an economy of 6.89 from 18 overs. In the title round, he bowled three tidy overs for 25 until Heinrich Klaasen got stuck into him in his last over, the 15th of the South African run chase which went for 24 and brought the equation down to 30 off 30 deliveries. The rest of the cricketing world might have forgotten what Axar had done till then, but his teammates clearly hadn't. The moment he completed that over and took his cap back from the umpire, everyone from Pant to Bumrah made a beeline to offer words of encouragement and to assure him that all was well. It was heartwarming to see so many seek out the ultimate team man in a high-pressure situation, reiterating just how highly Axar is regarded by his colleagues.

When he was appointed Gill's successor, no one had any misgivings. If it came to the crunch and Suryakumar was forced to miss a game or two due to injury, everyone knew what to expect from Axar the captain. He brought wickets aplenty to the World Cup, having held his own in his limited opportunities on batter-friendly tracks at home against South Africa and New Zealand, and fell into his metronomic rhythm when he took two wickets apiece in India's first three games while conceding just 73 runs in 11 overs.

Washington Sundar replacing him in Ahmedabad for India's final Group A league tie against the Netherlands last Wednesday hardly raised an eyebrow. For one thing, it was a 'dead' rubber inasmuch as there is any such thing in 20-over cricket. India had already secured qualification to the next stage, the Dutch were out of the competition, and the outcome wouldn't alter anything tangible. Washington was just coming off a long injury layoff and needed some game-time, so it was understandable for the think-tank to want him to shed residual rust and be prepared for future battles, if the need arose.

The Tamil Nadu all-rounder had a passable outing on his comeback, but he didn't do anything to set the Sabarmati afire. Expectations were that Axar would take his appointed place for the first Super Eight fixture against South Africa but the jinx of the vice-captaincy seemed to take him down as well, with Washington the preferred choice on the basis of 'match-ups' when the easier, more obvious option stared everyone in the face.

Hard to dispute

The logic behind Washington's inclusion is hard to dispute. South Africa have three left-handers in their top five - Quinton de Kock, Ryan Rickelton and David Miller - and India's plans revolved around getting Washington to bowl potentially two overs of off-spin in the PowerPlay against these left-handers. The leadership group, however, seemed not to have factored in Bumrah's genius. In his two-over first spell, he packed off de Kock and Rickelton, which meant Suryakumar was compelled to hold Washington back until the field spread out.

However, by the time he was brought on, Miller and Dewald Brevis were in the middle of a wonderful fourth-wicket alliance; Washington was reduced to just two overs which went for 17, and his lack of match practice was evident when he scratched around for 11 deliveries at No. 5 whilst making 11. Even before Washington's night mirrored that of India's and quickly became one to forget, the wisdom of going with the less experienced and more undercooked off-spinner at the expense of the seasoned pro that Axar is was being discussed threadbare. India's 76-run drubbing and a relatively anonymous night at the office for Washington merely exacerbated the dubious nature of the selection call, forcing the management group to resort to troubleshooting measures that seemed inadequate under the circumstances.

Whether a decision becomes a masterstroke or is pilloried for being ill thought out and counter-productive depends on whether it comes off or falls flat on its face. In this instance, however, there was a pressing need for India to bring Axar back into the mix, given the magnitude of the occasion and his immense experience and presence. If India did feel the need to have a right-arm finger spinner, then Washington could have kept his place in the XI ahead of Rinku Singh, who seems a little wasted at No. 7.

On the two occasions when he had

Axar has no pretensions to being a prodigious turner of the ball; he does just enough to catch the outside edge or beat the inside half

THE GIST

- Axar has been around for a long time, is well-liked and, beneath that gentle exterior, possesses an astute cricket brain and a steely resolve
- His captaincy chops have been honed at Delhi Capitals, whom he has led with aplomb if not the greatest success
- Whether a decision becomes a masterstroke or is pilloried for being ill thought out and counter-productive depends on whether it comes off or falls flat on its face

time and the opportunity to make a difference - against US in Mumbai in the opener when Suryakumar was at the other end, and on Sunday against the Proteas with Shivam Dube for company - Rinku has failed to come good. Maybe in Chennai, Washington's home ground, India will field both the local lad and Axar to give themselves more bowling options against Sikandar Raza's Zimbabwe on Thursday without losing too much by way of batting depth. It might appear a little extreme, but India have pushed themselves to the brink after their no-show in Ahmedabad and must now start fixing problem areas if they are not to rain on their own parade.

The hammering at the hands of South Africa has left India with no option but to win their two remaining games, by big margins if possible but not necessarily a must because they are so far back on the net run-rate count, and then hope for South Africa to come to their rescue by finishing with an all-win record. The first step towards that will be to get their collective heads out of the sand and start to accept that course-correction is inevitable. Axar getting back into the XI ought to be primary in that endeavour.

AFP & PTI

Can a ban solve under-16 phone problem?

Experts and parents remain divided on whether prohibition, regulation or guided usage would be the more practical path forward

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

As the Karnataka government weighs the pros and cons of restricting mobile phone use for children under 16, the proposal has raised questions about what exactly could be restricted, how it could be enforced, and whether a "blanket" ban could prove disadvantageous to certain groups of students.

While Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has flagged concerns over rising screen dependency, experts and parents remain divided on whether prohibition, regulation or guided usage would be the more practical path forward.

Students *The Hindu* interacted with acknowledged that mobile phones have become deeply embedded in their learning process. "Timetables and daily notes are usually shared in groups. In class, teachers explain concepts, but notes and materials are sent on WhatsApp," said Maithali Kumari, a class 6 student from a private school in Cambridge Layout, Halasuru. She added that teachers often share YouTube links to further explain topics, making phone access almost unavoidable for academic purposes.

Several students said they were strongly opposed to the idea of a blanket ban, arguing that the internet plays a significant role not only in their learning but also in "self-expression".

Several students say they are strongly opposed to the idea of a blanket ban, arguing that the internet plays a significant role not only in their learning but also in 'self-expression'. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Some also pointed out that social media has improved their confidence and communication skills. "I enjoy being online because it gives me a sense of freedom. I feel more comfortable expressing myself there. In school, there's always some pressure to fit in," said Deepak K., a class 8 student at a private school in Rajajinagar.

Parents raise concerns

Parents, however, highlighted that phone-based engagement linked to schooling has increased significantly after the Covid-19 pandemic, when online classes were introduced, and has since continued.

Guru Reddy, parent of a 13-year-old, argued that the government must first frame clear guidelines in consultation with schools, as schools have integrated phones into routine communication. He pointed out that teachers create messaging groups for their classes and updates, leading students to demand personal mobile phones.

"In many cases, children are getting exposed to content that affects their well-being. They are becoming addicted to gaming and spending most of their time on phones," he said. Schools, he added, circulate everything, from attendance updates and assignments, to leave and events, through WhatsApp groups. "This constant flow of updates even after school hours is not necessary. Children need time to focus on other skills and activities," he said.

Beyond a ban

Development educationist Niranjanaradhya V.P. said that if the government was considering a "ban" on mobile phones, there must first be clarity on what was being restricted, for how long, and for what reason. He stressed that such a move requires informed deliberation rather than an immediate response.

Mr. Niranjanaradhya, who was part of the committee that submitted its recommendations to the Chief Minister, said the key suggestion was to constitute a high-level committee to examine the issue from multiple perspectives.

He highlighted that technology use was only set to increase and that a decision taken in isolation could widen the urban-rural divide. While children in cities may have access to laptops and tablets at home, many students in rural areas depend solely on mobile phones to access digital content, he pointed out. A blanket ban could disproportionately affect those who already have limited access to technology.

Manoj Sharma, head of the SHUT (Service for Healthy Use of Technology) Clinic at NIMHANS, said that rather than viewing technology as inherently harmful, stakeholders must understand "how much is too much". With proper guidance and boundaries, he said, technology can be used in healthy ways.

Shashi Kumar D., general secretary of the Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS), called for a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)-based approach that balances child protection with the realities of digital integration in education. He proposed the introduction of a government-regulated "Student Internet Pack" that would allow access only to approved educational websites during school hours.

There is pressure from parents to ban mobile phones: DKS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday said that the State government was considering a ban on mobile phone for students, citing growing concern among parents over misuse.

Speaking to the media, Mr. Shivakumar said that there has been sustained pressure from parents to restrict phone usage in schools. He said that the government already banned phones in government schools. "Many countries have banned mobiles in schools, and we are discussing a similar move here," he said, adding that the proposal was under discussion.

Home Minister G. Parameshwara also expressed similar views on Monday.

The development is expected to ease entry onto the stretch and streamline movement towards Challaghatta and adjoining areas. FILE PHOTO

NICE to open 1.5-km link road near Deepanjali Nagar soon

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Nandi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprises (NICE) is set to throw open a newly built 1.5-km connecting road near Deepanjali Nagar junction on Mysuru Road, for better access to NICE road, also known as The Bangalore-Mysore Infrastructure Corridor Project (BMICP).

The four-lane stretch links the Deepanjali Nagar junction (BHEL Circle) directly to the NICE Road near Hosakerehalli PES College, forming part of the NICE road stretch. The development is expected to ease entry onto the stretch and streamline movement towards Challaghatta and adjoining areas.

NICE promoter Ashok Kheny, in a post on X dated February 21, said the upcoming stretch would soon be ready for commuters. "Soon, one of the most beautiful and well-developed NICE roads in our city will be ready to serve you. This new stretch connecting Deepanjali Nagar junction to the NICE Expressway is set to make your drive smoother, faster," Mr. Kheny stated in the post. Work on the project, however, faced a delay due to land acquisition issues. Currently, commuters travelling the 11-km stretch from Deepanjali Nagar junction to Challaghatta during peak hours spend between 45 minutes and an hour on the road. Key junctions such as Nayandahalli, R.R. Nagar, Jnanabharathi, and Pattenagere frequently witness heavy congestion, particularly at traffic signals.

With the new link providing direct connectivity to the NICE Road, travel time to Challaghatta is expected to reduce to around 30 minutes.

ED files supplementary chargesheet in ₹2,300 crore online betting, money laundering case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has filed a supplementary prosecution complaint against several individuals and entities in connection with a massive illegal online betting and gambling-linked money laundering case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The complaint, filed on February 20, named Pruthvi N. Raj, K.C. Thippeswamy of Fonepaisa Payment Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Gulshan Khattar of Puppy's Tours and Travels LLP, Arjun Nagabhushan, Abhijith Sajjan of Logicforge Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

The case pertains to illegal online betting activities, with Chitradurga Congress MLA K.C. Veerendra identified as the main accused.

According to the ED, the investigation was initiated based on multiple FIRs registered by various State police authorities under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

The FIRs relate to cheating, impersonation and extortion of the public through illegal online betting platforms such as King567, Play567, Playwin567 and Gamexch, among others. The agency's probe revealed that funds generated through these platforms were routed via multiple payment gateways, mule bank accounts, foreign entities and virtual digital assets, along with outward remittances.

Earlier, the ED had conducted searches at over 60 locations across Karnataka and other States, leading to the seizure of substantial quantities of cash, gold bullion, gold and silver jewellery, vehicles, digital devices and incriminating documents.

Congress MLA Veerendra was previously arrested under Section 19 of the PMLA, 2002. A prosecution complaint had already been filed against him on October 18, 2025.

The ED also provisionally attached movable and immovable properties worth approximately ₹177.30 crore under Section 5(1) of the PMLA, 2002. During the course of investigation, proceeds of crime exceeding ₹2,300 crore have been identified so far, the ED claimed. The agency stated that the funds were generated through illegal online betting and gambling activities and laundered through multiple layers of transactions.

From Page One

Crowd control: SOP will be in force till law is enacted, says HC

Pointing out that the measures provided in the SOP are much better when compared to the provisions made in the Bill, Ms. Susheela had suggested that the legislature panel could also take into account measures indicated in the SOP while finalising the Bill.

The State government last year submitted the SOP for the court's consideration and the Advocate-General in December, 2025, agreed to take suggestions from the *amicus curiae* and various parties to the petition, including the Karnataka State Cricket Association, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, DNA Entertainment Networks Pvt. Ltd., and others. The government on January 13 submitted revised SOP incorporating several of their suggestions.

As per the SOP, organisers of any event, in which 1,000 or more individuals are likely to gather, and procession, in which more than 100 individuals are participating, will have to submit application in the prescribed forms along with the crowd management plan, before the designated police officer. The SOP proposes to set up a technological platforms and digital portals for applying for permission, obtaining no-objection certificate from various authorities, assessing the application and taking decision on the application within the three days from the date of application.

The event organiser, the SOP states, shall ensure that no social media posts, or releases in electronic or print media, pertaining to the event, are made in deviation from the terms and conditions of the licence, without prior approval from the licensing authority. The organiser shall also be responsible for addressing and clarifying any misinformation or rumours related to the event, if they arise. While the SOP deals with how the law-enforcing agencies will have to act from the date of receipt of application for conducting events till the post-event analysis, it also requires all police personnel up to the rank of sub-inspector of police to undergo a mandatory annual refresher course on crowd management based on the SOP.

Joint inspection for proposed elevated rotary flyover held

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) M. Maheshwar Rao on Monday conducted a joint site inspection at IOC Junction near Baiyappanahalli on Banasawadi Main Road to review plans for a proposed elevated rotary flyover and related infrastructure works.

Officials from the Bangalore Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE) and Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company Limited (K-RIDE) were part of the inspection.

It was carried out to coordinate with the construction of a more than 3-km-long elevated rotary flyover at IOC Junction and an additional two-lane railway overbridge at the Baiyappanahalli railway level crossing.

Mr. Rao told officials to ensure that both projects were taken up simultaneously, without causing inconvenience to commuters, and completed within the stipulated timeframe. The project, estimated to cost around ₹380 crore, is aimed at easing traffic congestion along the busy Maruthi Sevanagar, Banasawadi, Kammanahalli, Baiyappanahalli corridor.

The review gains importance as the K-RIDE is also set to begin suburban rail project work in the same area.

The tender process for the rotary flyover is under way and in the financial bid evaluation stage, Mr. Rao said.

VTU signs agreement with German varsity

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) has decided to enter into an academic agreement with Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Germany, in the coming academic year.

Speaking on the occasion, VTU Vice-Chancellor S. Vidyashankar said, "Already, the Dortmund University has signed academic agreements with two private colleges in Karnataka and is conducting certificate courses. In the same model, the VTU will enter into an academic agreement in the upcoming academic year for research and development. This will give our students the opportunity to go to Germany and learn."

Stephan Weyers, Vice-Rector for Teaching, Studies & International Affairs, said, "We are eager to sign an agreement with the VTU. This will allow us to introduce a twinning programme."

It will be very beneficial for students, as they will be able to come to Germany and study, Mr. Weyers said.

New V-C for music varsity

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Governor and Chancellor Thaawarchand Gehlot has appointed K. Ramakrishnaiah, senior professor and chairman of Performing Arts, Bangalore University, as Vice-Chancellor of Karnataka Rajya Dr. Gangubai Hangal Sangeetha mattu Pradarshaka Kalegala Vishwavidyalaya, Mysuru, for the period of four years.

After a gap of more than a year, the vishwavidyalaya has got a new Vice-Chancellor. The post was vacant since July 23, 2025.

THE HINDU IN SCHOOL PRESENTS SCHOOL BUZZ
A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

COMMEMORATIVE SPECIAL COVER RELEASE

Clarence High School released a Commemorative Special Cover in collaboration with India Post, recognising the institution's 111-year contribution to education and community service. Shri Dheeraj Muniraj, Honourable MLA of the Doddaballapur Assembly Constituency and an alumnus, attended as Chief Guest and reflected on the strong foundation the school had provided. He highlighted the need for civic sense and ethical values among students. Ms. Selvi C, Chief Postmaster, Bengaluru GPO, also joined the event. The Special Cover showcases the school's founders and former leaders, celebrating their rich heritage.

IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE BY STUDENTS

JSS Public School, HSR Layout students delivered an impressive performance at the SKS International Martial Arts Championship organised by the Karate Federation of Shotokan – India. Under the guidance of Chief Karate Master Mr. Suresh Babu, the participants secured three first places, eleven second places, and five third places. Principal Mrs. Anu Sharma and Vice Principal Mr. Ravi Joshi presented the prizes and congratulated the achievers, appreciating their dedication, discipline, and the committed training provided by their coach.

TEDX HOSTED

Soundarya Central School hosted TEDxSoundaryaCentralSchool Youth, creating a vibrant platform for ideas, innovation, and youthful perspectives. The programme featured three curated sessions with 12 speakers from diverse fields who shared insights and experiences that encouraged creative and critical thinking. Ten student speakers from the Soundarya Group of Institutions presented their ideas with confidence and clarity. Enthusiastic audience participation added energy to the event. The school management felicitated all speakers, acknowledging their contribution and reinforcing the institution's commitment to nurturing creativity and intellectual growth.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Raghavendra Desai:
Handphone:+91 9986196254 | Email: desai.rnb@thehindu.co.in

Unusual ancient gene governs sex of ant, bee, wasp newborns

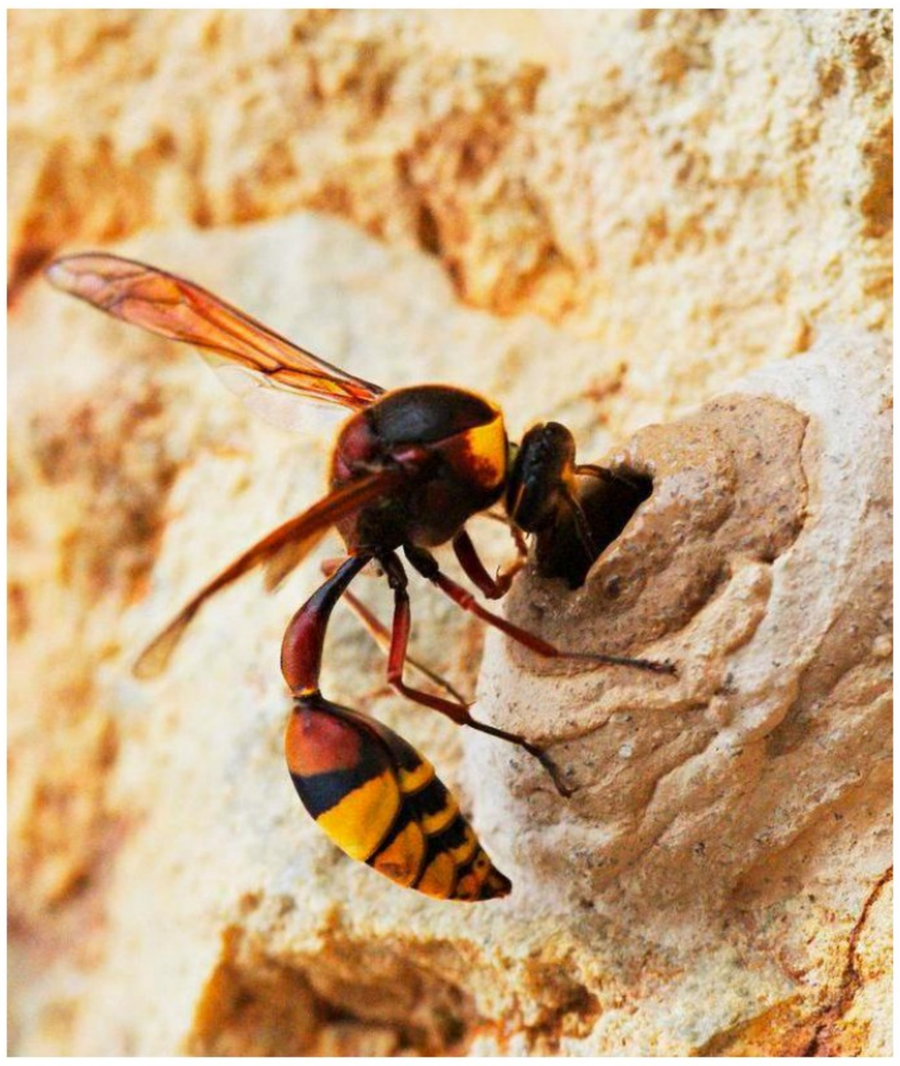
Research has found that in ants, bees, and wasps, the sex can depend on whether or not an embryo inherits two different copies of one DNA patch; the findings point to a practical way to check genetic variety and reduce the risk of these sterile males in breeding and conservation

D.P. Kasbekar

In many animals, sex is decided by obvious physical differences in the chromosomes. But in ants, bees, and wasps, sex is often decided in a more unusual way: by whether an embryo carries two different versions of a specific DNA region or two matching ones.

Two studies, one in *Science Advances* in 2024 and the other in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* in January 2026, have shown that this rule is controlled by a stretch of DNA that doesn't even make a protein – and that the same basic setup has persisted across an unusually large span of evolutionary time.

The finding could be used to more closely monitor the diversity of these insects.



A potter wasp builds a mud nest in France, August 2012. IAN ALEXANDER (CC BY-SA)

Genetic switch

The 2024 study focused on the Argentine ant (*Linepithema humile*), an invasive species. The researchers were motivated by a gap in what biologists know about sex determination in most insects: they understand some famous examples, like fruit flies, but many economically and ecologically important insects, including the 1.2 lakh species of ants, bees, and wasps, use methods whose core molecular triggers have been hard to pin down.

In these insects, females usually develop from fertilised eggs and have two chromosome sets while males usually develop from unfertilised eggs and have one.

Sometimes, however, fertilised eggs produce diploid males, males with two chromosome sets, and they are typically sterile. This is bad news for colonies and for species that are bred commercially or are trying to survive in the wild.

To find the genetic switch behind this method, the 2024 team compared DNA patterns in female ants and diploid males produced by inbreeding. They found a single small region in the genome where females were consistently 'mixed', i.e. carried two different versions, while diploid males were consistently 'matched', carrying two copies of the same version. In other words: being 'mixed' at this spot reliably predicted female development and being 'matched' predicted male development.

Remarkable findings

When the researchers looked closely at this sex-determining region, they made two remarkable observations. First, the region was extremely diverse. In the invasive European populations they sampled, the team could distinguish seven different versions, or alleles, of the region and the diversity around it was the highest they detected anywhere in the genome.

Second, and more surprising, the region did not contain any protein-coding gene that could work like a classic master switch. Instead the main gene overlapping the region produced a long noncoding RNA, which is an RNA molecule that is made from DNA but which is not translated into a protein.

The team called this gene *ANTSR*. The evidence suggested the main issue wasn't which protein *ANTSR* makes – it makes none – but how strongly *ANTSR* is turned on. In embryos that were 'mixed' at the sex locus, *ANTSR* expression was higher. In embryos that were 'matched', *ANTSR* expression was lower.

Then the team connected *ANTSR* to a well-known downstream part of insect sex development, a gene called *tra*, which helps steer development towards male or female forms.

Argentine ants are not easy to genetically engineer, so the researchers used a technique called RNA interference. They injected embryos with double-stranded RNA designed to knock down *ANTSR*, lowering its activity. When they did this in embryos that were genetically destined to be female, about 10% switched to showing the male-type *tra* splicing pattern while the control embryos did not. In the paper's wording, the knockdown results supported the idea that *ANTSR* sits upstream of *tra* and helps instruct female development.

So the 2024 conclusion was both specific and broad. In Argentine ants, the main readout of the sex locus seems to be whether *ANTSR* is strongly expressed and that *ANTSR* helps push the embryo into the female developmental pathway. More broadly, the study suggested a new kind of regulatory logic: instead of different protein keys fitting different protein locks, the signal may actually come from how two noncoding alleles interact to boost or fail to boost gene activity.

The sex-determining region in Argentine ants did not contain any protein-coding gene; instead the main gene overlapping the region produced a long noncoding RNA, which is an RNA molecule that is made from DNA but not translated into a protein

Conserved block

The second and more recent study, published on January 5, started from a bigger evolutionary mystery raised by the first. The 2024 paper found that *ANTSR* itself changes quickly at the sequence level. Yet the genomic neighbourhood around *ANTSR* looked similar across ants, bees, and stinging wasps.

Specifically, *ANTSR* sits in a conserved block between two protein-coding genes called *CRELD2* and *THUMPD3*. The 2026 team checked if this was a coincidence by combining two approaches.

First, the researchers performed comparative genomics across dozens of bee, wasp, and ant genomes looking for matching gene order. This test would show whether *CRELD2* and *THUMPD3* flank an 'empty' interval where a noncoding locus could sit.

Second, they genetically mapped two lineages far from ants: bumblebees and hornets. The logic was that if a complementary sex-determining locus was operating, females should be 'mixed' at that locus while diploid males should be 'matched'.

A similar pattern

In bumblebees (*Bombus terrestris*), the researchers had brothers and sisters mate and collected the early males. Genome sequencing showed that most of these early males were diploid. When the team compared their genomes, they found a single region that was consistently heterozygous in females and homozygous in diploid males. And that region included the candidate *ANTSR* locus.

They found a similar pattern in hornets: a single interval was consistently heterozygous in females but homozygous in diploid males, again overlapping the candidate *ANTSR* region.

They also looked for a distinctive genomic signature that such loci should leave behind. Complementary sex determination tends to maintain many alleles in a population because 'matching' at the locus produces sterile diploid males, which evolution doesn't like to perpetuate.

This means in a species using such a system, that locus should be unusually diverse. The 2026 team reported that, across resequencing data from females of 17 species, most showed a sharp heterozygosity peak in the interval between *CRELD2* and *THUMPD3*, consistent with a shared, rather than diverse, complementary sex-determining locus.

Practical implications

The findings challenge the standard expectation that insect sex-determining master switches turn over rapidly. The *ANTSR* locus looks like an exception: an ancient primary signal conserved for more than 150 million years, but in function and position rather than in its sequence. In other words, evolution may preserve what a DNA region does even when changing what it looks like.

The studies also have practical implications. Diploid male production is a real problem for many hymenopterans, including important pollinators and biological control insects. If the same genomic region can be tracked across many species, breeders and conservation biologists could measure how much diversity exists at the sex locus and manage matings or populations to reduce the chances of producing sterile males. The 2026 paper explicitly pointed to this use to monitor diversity of insects of the order Aculeata.

The studies together also offer a broader lesson about genomes: biologists often search for conserved biology by searching for conserved sequences. But the studies revealed not a conserved protein-coding gene but a conserved genomic slot.

(D.P. Kasbekar is a retired scientist. kasbekardp@yahoo.co.in)

A farmer spraying pesticide in Jind district of Haryana on January 14, 2026. R.V. MOORTHY

India a big contributor to global toxicity by pesticides

Divya Gandhi

India is among just four countries that contribute almost 70% to the world's total applied toxicity (TAT) in the form of pesticides directed at agricultural pests, but in effect unleashes collateral damage among "non-target" species.

In 2022, at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, countries committed to reducing pesticide risk by 50% by 2030.

According to a new paper in *Science*, however, efforts to fulfill the pact are not on track. Researchers, for the very first time, calculated the TAT from 2013 to 2019 across more than 600 pesticides, in 65 countries, and found that it had increased. China, Brazil, the U.S., and India are the biggest contributors of global TAT, accounting for nearly 70%. Pesticides were used copiously on fruits, vegetables, maize, soybean, rice, and other cereals. The study also found that toxicity increased in India, the U.S., Brazil and countries in Africa.

China, Brazil, the U.S., and India are the biggest contributors of global TAT, accounting for nearly 70%. Pesticides were used copiously on fruits, vegetables, maize, soybean, rice, and cereals

To estimate TAT at a national level, the scientists checked the annual amount of pesticide used in agriculture in the study countries and the compounds' toxicity and lethality for different non-target species, such as pollinators, aquatic plants, invertebrates, fish, terrestrial arthropods, soil organisms, terrestrial vertebrates, and plants. The researchers found that terrestrial arthropods were most affected, followed by soil organisms and fish. The toxicity has been affecting people as well.

"These chemicals now permeate daily life in ways that are often invisible: in wall paints, incense sticks, furniture, aircraft cabins, stored grains, and even temple prasad," the author, Narasimha Reddy Donthi, an independent public policy expert, wrote.

The Insecticides Act 1968 focuses on agricultural use, with few provisions for "ordinary use" in homes, hotels, construction sites, and transport systems, he added. The 1968 Act is obsolete, Mr. Donthi told *The Hindu*. "The use, misuse, and overuse have changed since 1968. Pesticides have become more toxic. They are persistent across food, water and soil." India uses at least 66 pesticides that are banned elsewhere, he added.

The new Pesticides Management Bill 2025 is expected to be passed in March this year. It aims to reduce the risk to the environment and push for pesticides that are "biological and based on traditional knowledge". But without taking expert inputs, it could be worse-off than the 1968 Act, he said. "India needs a long-term transformation policy in agriculture, shifting away from 'green revolution' packages, which includes pesticides, in view of the farmers' crisis, climate change, chemical-residue laden environment. Liability has to be inbuilt into law, as a policy," Mr. Donthi said.

To ensure comprehensive monitoring, it is essential that all countries regularly report updated annual data on agricultural pesticide use, broken down by active ingredient, study co-author Jakob Wolfram, of the Institute for Environmental Sciences, University Kaiserslautern-Landau in Germany, said.

As the environmental activist Rachel Carson wrote in her 1962 book *Silent Spring*: "If we are going to live so intimately with these chemicals eating and drinking them, taking them into the very marrow of our bones," we had better know something about the power of the "who's who of pesticides".

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

The science of taste

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

You don't 'taste' most of what you call taste. Instead, a large share of the flavour comes from _____ smell, which is aroma moving from the mouth to the nose. This is why food can seem bland when you have a blocked nose. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2

Scientists used a compound in chilli peppers called X to probe the receptor that produces the sensation of burning pain. The work led them to identify TRPV1, an ion channel that responds to noxious heat and capsaicin, and helped establish the molecular picture of how the nervous system detects temperature and pain. Name X.

QUESTION 3

There is some evidence that humans can taste fat, especially certain fatty acids, in a specific way that goes beyond texture and aroma, using dedicated receptors. This is why scientists have proposed the term '_____' as a distinct taste quality. Fill in the blank with a word that means "oily taste" in Latin.

QUESTION 4

Many people with certain variants of the TAS2R38 gene, which is related to tasting bitterness, find compounds like phenylthiocarbamide and 6-n-propylthiouracil intensely bitter, and they often also report stronger sensations from some other foods. What is the colloquial term for such people?

QUESTION 5

When a small small current is applied on the tongue, it can produce sour or metallic sensations because it changes the way ions flow and thus the local chemistry on the surface of the tongue. What is this phenomenon called?

VISUAL: Name this berry. It contains a compound called miraculin that binds to sweet receptors and can make acidic foods like lemon taste sweet for about an hour. PUBLIC DOMAIN

Answers to February 17 quiz:

1. Proverb related to fresh-cut grass – **Ans: Make hay while the sun shines**
2. Time perception when you constantly monitor it – **Ans: Prospective**
3. Part of the nervous system that regulates finger temperature – **Ans: Sympathetic**
4. Principle that explains people spending "bad" money – **Ans: Gresham's law**
5. Climate phenomena denoting points of no return – **Ans: Tipping points**

Visual: **Ethylene**

First contact: Tamal Biswas | K.N. Viswanathan | Anmol Agrawal

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

RERA disposal rates mask poor recovery for homebuyers: FPCE

Assessing the implementation of RERA through the rate of disposal of complaints is misleading, says the forum

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A status report on the implementation of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, released by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, shows that Real Estate Regulatory Authority - Karnataka (RERA-K) has achieved an 80% progress in disposal of complaints.

Haryana-Gurugram and Maharashtra have performed better than Karnataka in the disposal of complaints. Maharashtra had the largest number of projects as well as complaints, data showed.

However, the Forum for People's Collective Efforts (FPCE), which has been at the forefront of the fight for homebuyers in the State, said assessing the implementation of RERA through the rate of disposal of complaints was misleading.

"States such as Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka report impressive disposal figures; however, the real challenge begins after a favourable order is passed. 'Disposal' merely indicates that a judgment has been delivered, but enforcement, ensuring that buyers receive refunds or possession, remains a major hurdle," it said.

The status report shows that Real Estate Regulatory Authority - Karnataka has achieved an 80% progress in disposal of complaints.
SUDHAKARA JAIN

According to data, as of January 23, a total of 2,325 Revenue Recovery Certificates worth ₹1,081.84 crore have been issued

According to data compiled by FPCE from the RERA-K website as of January 23, a total of 2,325 Revenue Recovery Certificates (RRCs) worth ₹1,081.84 crore have been issued. However, only 282 cases involving ₹110.27 crore have been recovered, reflecting recovery rates of just 8.24% in number and 9.81% in value, the release stated.

Lax implementation

Lax implementation of the RRCs issued by RERA has been a longstanding issue with the implementation of the Act. Once RERA-K issues RRCs, they are referred to the State's revenue administration for implementation.

The Deputy Commissioners of the districts are in charge of the same. FPCE had earlier demanded that RERA-K be given the power to execute its orders as well. Gujarat and Haryana have adopted this model. There was a proposal to make an AC-level officer in charge in every district for implementing RRCs and bring in accountability. However, there has been no movement on either proposal.

M.S. Shankar, General Secretary, FPCE, said there is an urgent need for a national RERA portal that tracks cases until actual recovery and displays the total money refunded to buyers, rather than merely highlighting disposal statistics.

RERA implementation status (as of Feb. 16, 2026)

Total projects	8,379
Residential projects	4,452
Residential units	8,67,471
Total carpet area of residential units (in lakh sq.ft.)	7,136
Registered real estate agents	6,820
Cases filed	2,681
Cases disposed of	10,212

Revenue recovery

	Numbers	Value (₹ cr.)
Revenue Recovery Certificates (RRC) issued	2,325	1,081.84
RRCs recovered	282	110.27
Percentage of RRCs recovered	8.24	9.81

Source: Forum for People's Collective Efforts (FPCE)

Second round of GPS survey detects ₹318 cr. in tax dues from 13,600 properties

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has detected property tax underpayment amounting to around ₹318 crore from 13,600 properties during the second round of its GPS-based property survey and special house-to-house verification.

In its first phase, the authority had detected property tax evasion amounting to around ₹370 crore covering about 10,000 properties across the city. The total recovery process now covers 23,600 properties involving about ₹688 crore.

Special Commissioner (Revenue and IT) Munish Moudgil said that nearly 67,000 notices have been issued in this phase, roughly one for each assessment year per property, as most of the identified properties had underreported details for multiple years.

This was carried out by the GBA's IT department along with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), and field visits by GPS teams under the city corporations. By combining on-ground property data, GPS tagging and drone imagery, officials identified cases where property owners had paid less tax, on average, over the past five years, he said.

Mr. Moudgil said that during house-to-house visits, GPS teams access property tax data through a mobile application.

"They capture the GPS location of each property and record details such as usage (residential, commercial or mixed), built-up area and number of floors. The information is transmitted to a backend system, where a Quality Control (QC) team conducts 100% verification. Any discrepancies are sent back to field teams for re-verification," he said, adding that once cleared, the data is compared with drone images and digitised built-up area records.

If the actual construction exceeds the declared area, or if commercial use, partial or full, has not been disclosed, the system automatically generates a show-cause notice along with applicable interest and penalties, he added.

In its first phase, the Greater Bengaluru Authority had detected property tax evasion amounting to around ₹370 crore, covering about 10,000 properties across the city. FILE PHOTO

Accused flees after failed bid to loot bank

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An attempted theft was reported at a branch of Canara Bank in Seshadripuram during the early hours of Monday, despite the presence of the security guard at the gate. An unidentified man allegedly tried to break into the bank at around 3 a.m. He is believed to have cut open the rear grill of the building to gain entry into the premises. After entering the bank, he cut a wire, in an attempt to disable the security system. The act triggered the alarm system, setting off a siren. As the siren began blaring, the accused panicked and fled the scene.

A team of police from Seshadripuram Police Station visited the spot and conducted an inspection. A case has been registered, and efforts are on to trace the accused.

A day after honeytrap charge was made, college student alleges she was gang-raped

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 19-year-old college student has alleged gang rape, a day after a 34-year-old second-hand car dealer alleged honey trapping and extortion by a ring, involving her.

Nikhil H.D., a resident of Rajajinagar, lodged a complaint with the Malleswaram Police on Saturday, that he had met a girl at a Valentine's Day party organised by a person identified as Daka, who hired a villa he runs in Jakkur for the party.

He said he had dropped the girl near a bakery at Rajajinagar after the party in the wee hours of the day and returned.

However, days later, he claimed that he saw a post by the girl on social media alleging that she was gangraped.

On Sunday, the girl in question, a first-year BA student, lodged a complaint with Amrutahalli Police alleging gang rape

He soon started getting calls from people claiming to be representing a Kannada news channel who tried to extort money from him.

They reportedly threatened to make allegations of rape against him on their channel.

A day later, on Sunday, the girl in question, a first-year BA student, lodged a complaint with Amrutahalli Police alleging gang rape.

She claimed that she came in contact with one of the accused, Dixson Sandro (21), a native of West Bengal, through social media and he invited her to the party at the villa in Jakkur, where she met Nikhil.

She claimed that the two men forcibly administered a pill to her, after which she began to feel dizzy and became semi-conscious.

She further alleged that both accused sexually assaulted her.

Cases registered

Cases have been registered in both Malleswaram and Amrutahalli Police Stations and a probe is under way, a senior police official said.

Third edition of Karnataka State Police Run on Sunday

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Police, in collaboration with State Bank of India (SBI), Bengaluru Circle, has announced the third edition of the Karnataka State Police (KSP) Run, scheduled to be held on Sunday. Launched in 2024 to mark 50 years of the State police force, this year's edition is centred around the theme "Namma Police Namma Hemme".The announcement was made at a press conference addressed by M.A. Saleem, Director General and Inspector General of Police and Joohi Smita Sinha, chief general manager, SBI, Bengaluru Circle.

Timings
BENGALURU

TUESDAY, FEB. 24	
RISE 06:38	SET 18:27
RISE 11:34	SET 00:00
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25	
RISE 06:38	SET 18:28
RISE 12:32	SET 00:57
THURSDAY, FEB. 26	
RISE 06:37	SET 18:28
RISE 13:35	SET 02:01

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	33	20
Bengaluru	32	20

Bengaluru Today
31°C The weather will be dry. Day will be slight warm. Night will be cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
30°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be cool.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2026
All rights reserved.

starts tomorrow
swadeshi by gocoop
utsav
craft. culture. celebration.
120+ ARTISAN STALLS
craft exhibition | workshops
cultural performances | food court
25th February to 1st March 2026 | 11 AM - 8 PM
Jayamahal Palace Hotel, 1, Jayamahal Main Rd,
Near Cantonment Railway Station Road
www.GoSwadeshi.in
India's 1st National award winning online marketplace for weaves & crafts
Follow us on
Instagram @letsgocoop | Facebook/gocoop

artisan support partner: gocoop livelihoods foundation
curation partner: the good loom by gocoop
cultural partner: Trikala
pavilion partner: FLOURISH made from good

VIT CHENNAI
THE HINDU GROUP
Raising the Bar in Legal Discourse
An impactful discussion forum featuring India's finest legal minds
Building on the resounding success of its inaugural edition, The Hindu, in partnership with VIT School of Law, VIT Chennai, presents Justice Unplugged 2026, now convening in New Delhi, the nation's constitutional and legal epicentre.
The conclave addresses key questions, including the impact of Gen AI on legal practice, fundamental rights in the digital age, and improving access to justice, offering aspiring lawyers, law students and young legal professionals a rare opportunity to engage directly with distinguished leaders of the legal fraternity and gain valuable insights.
Join us for a day of inspiring conversations and meaningful perspectives.
VITSOL VIT School Of Law
Justitia non est neganda, non differenda
presents
JUSTICE UNPLUGGED 2026
Shaping the Future of Law
in association with THE HINDU
Date: 28 February 2026
Time: 10:30 am onwards
Location: New Delhi
For Registrations
Scan the QR code or visit
newsth.live/THVITJU

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of rape cases reported in Odisha last year

2,994 Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi informed the Assembly that 2,994 rape and 7,382 molestation cases were reported in the State in 2025. The CM said 1,183 cases of sexual harassment and 115 attempt to rape cases were also reported. PTI

Number of Maoists who surrendered in Chhattisgarh in 2 years

2,704 Chhattisgarh Governor Ramen Deka declared that the State is on the verge of eliminating left-wing extremism, citing a massive crackdown with 532 Maoists neutralised, more than 2,700 surrendering and 2,004 arrested in the last two years. PTI

Flights disrupted due to drones during the Lunar New Year

50 Unauthorised drones disrupted more than 50 flights at Vietnam's Danang international airport during the Lunar New Year holiday. Two separate incidents last week saw flights delayed or forced into holding patterns when authorities detected drones flying close to aircraft. AFP

Amount utilised for flood management post-2014 in J&K

487 in ₹ crore. The Jammu and Kashmir government has expended over ₹487 crore on a series of flood management initiatives under various phases of the flood management programme, in the aftermath of the 2014 deluge that ravaged the Valley. PTI

Amount required by Ukraine to rebuild from Russia's invasion

588 In $ billion. Ukraine needs $588 billion to rebuild from the destruction caused by Russia's four-year invasion, a figure almost three times the country's annual economic output, the World Bank and other institutions said. AFP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us facebook.com/thehindu X.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

On the independence of the EC

An independent Election Commission is the bedrock of Indian democracy. To ensure that it remains so, various safeguards are built into the basic structure of the Constitution

LETTER & SPIRIT

C.B.P. Srivastava

Free and fair elections are key to a successful and vibrant democracy, a maxim included in the Basic Structure of the Constitution via *Indira Gandhi versus Raj Narain* (1975). However, in recent times, the fairness of the electoral process in India has been under question for many reasons, culminating in a resolution by the Opposition alliance to remove the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). These controversies centre around the issue of alleged 'vote theft', and the manipulation of electoral rolls in the much-talked about Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

It has been alleged that the Election Commission (EC) has allowed massive irregularities in voter lists, specifically targeting minority and Opposition-supporting voters. It was alleged that the SIR in Bihar was rushed and designed to delete voters in order to target minorities. The names of approximately 65 lakh voters have been deleted during the SIR exercise which was challenged in the Supreme Court.

This is quite a casual way of doing away with a citizen's 'right to vote'. Adult franchise as provided in Article 326 of the Constitution is the bedrock of democracy. Any procedural impropriety would affect its merit and sanctity.

Speaking out: Activists from various groups stage a protest against the SIR at Freedom park in Bengaluru on February 7. ALLEN EGENUSE. J

THE GIST

- It has been alleged that the Election Commission (EC) has allowed massive irregularities in voter lists, specifically targeting minority and Opposition-supporting voters.
- Article 324 provides for an EC with a CEC and other commissioners, and also includes a provision for regional commissioners.
- Though the Opposition has said that it will adopt democratic tools to move the motion against the CEC, it is unlikely to get passed as the ruling alliance holds sufficient majority in Parliament.

On selecting the EC

The process of appointing election commissioners had caused controversy when the Government passed the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Office and Terms of Office) Act, 2023, which regulates the appointment and removal of the CEC and election commissioners, replacing the 1991 Act. The 2023 Act stipulates that election commissioners should be appointed by the President based on a selection committee comprised of the Prime Minister, a Union Minister and the Leader of Opposition. It was alleged that the passing of the Act was in contravention of the decision of the Supreme Court in *Anoop Baranwal versus Union of India, 2023* in which the Court held that the Chief Justice of India should also be included in the committee. However, this provision was removed which created a controversy on the grounds that the independence of the EC would be adversely affected. The Act has been challenged again in *Jaya Thakur versus Union of India, 2024*. The next hearing for the same is scheduled for March 2026.

The Constitutional mandate

The Constitution of India, under Article 324, provides for a permanent Election Commission with powers of superintendence, direction and control of the elections of the President, Vice-President, Parliament and of the legislature of the States. This constitutional basis and permanency of the Commission creates a background for its independence. The 2023 Act provides that the CEC will hold office for six years or until the age of 65, whichever is earlier. By far the most significant provision ensuring independence of the EC is the provision for the removal of the CEC and other election commissioners. Clause (5) of Article 324 says that the CEC can be removed only in the manner prescribed for the removal of a Supreme Court judge under Article 124(4), which are either proved misbehaviour or incapacity. Under Article 324(5), the CEC's conditions of service cannot be varied to their disadvantage during their tenure.

The removal of other election commissioners is done by the President on the advice of the CEC. However, the Supreme Court in *Vineet Narain versus Union of India, 1997* held that the CEC shall not give his advice *suo motu*. This provision strikes a balance between the executive power and the independence of the election commissioners.

The CEC's position

Article 324 provides for an EC with a CEC and other commissioners, and also includes a provision for regional commissioners. In 1989, the commission was made multi-member but the two additional posts were abolished in 1990. Again on October 1, 1993 after drawing strength from clause (2) of Article 324, it was made a multi-member commission permanently which was validated by the Supreme Court in *T. N. Seshan versus Union of India* (1995).

Interestingly, Clause (3) of Article 324 provides that when any Election Commissioner is so appointed the CEC, he/she shall act as the Chairman of the EC. The language of Article 324 makes it crystal clear that the CEC is appointed and commissioned as the commissioner having certain exclusive powers, and in case of making the Commission multi-member, he shall preside over the meeting as its chairman. The idea behind this provision is to ensure that the conduct of elections is done by an administrator and at the same time to make the decision of the Commission consensus-based or democratic. Such provisions also ensure the independence of this constitutional body.

The procedure to remove the CEC is very complex and rigorous. It is a quasi-judicial Parliamentary procedure. The complexity of the process ensures its independence from any possible arbitrary action by the government. While the Representation of the People Act of 1950 and 1951 focuses on electoral procedures, voter registration, and candidate qualifications, Section 11 of the CEC and other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Terms of Office) Act, 2023 gives the procedure to remove the CEC and other Commissioners.

For the removal of the CEC, Article 324 (5) shall be read with Article 124(4) in order to understand the grounds for removal and the procedure.

Section 3 of the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, deals with the investigation into misbehaviour or incapacity by a commission member. It says that if notice is given to the Lok Sabha, at least 100 members must sign, while in the case of the Rajya Sabha, the minimum number of signatories to such a motion shall not be less than 50. Following this, the Speaker or, as the case may be, the Chairman may admit or refuse the motion.

The Speaker or Chairman thereafter constitutes a three-member committee comprising the Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court Judge, the Chief Justice of a High Court and a distinguished jurist.

In order to ensure coordination between the two Houses of Parliament, a provision is made that if the notice is given to both Houses on the same day, the committee shall be constituted only after both Houses accept the motion.

Further, definite charges must be framed and communicated on which investigation needs to be conducted. The CEC should be given reasonable time and opportunity to present his statement of defence. This is a provision which ensures the protection of the Doctrine of Natural Justice by way of protecting the 'Rule of Fair Hearing'. This is again one of the most significant features of India's Constitution. In the case of allegations of any physical or mental incapacity, medical examination by a medical board appointed by the Speaker or Chairman, as the case may be, needs to be conducted.

The political angle

Though the Opposition has said that it will adopt democratic tools to move the motion against the CEC, it is unlikely to get passed as the ruling alliance holds sufficient majority in Parliament. The ruling government has rejected the allegations of any bias. The moot point is that constitutional bodies must be well-respected by all, be it citizens, ruling parties or the Opposition; otherwise, it sends a wrong signal to the masses across the country.

All political parties need to consider that constitutional or statutory bodies operate according to the provisions provided in the Constitution or in the respective statutes. While dissent against the actions of such bodies is not wrong, it should also be considered that the politicisation of the Constitution or constitutional bodies would be detrimental to Indian democracy.

The political safeguard provided by the Constitution must be taken care of and any dilution would be politically sensitive mainly because it would affect fairness in the electoral process and in the balance of power between the Government and independent and credible democratic institutions. The rule of thumb in Indian democracy is that it thrives on a blend of liberality and command, by balancing the authority of the state with the liberty of its citizens.

C.B. P Srivastava is President, Centre for Applied Research in Governance, Delhi.

ITC files plaint against smuggling of counterfeit cigarettes

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A field executive of ITC Ltd. has filed a complaint with the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) police alleging large-scale smuggling and sale of counterfeit cigarettes from Cambodia under the company's brand name.

Misuse of brand name

According to the complainant, duplicate cigarettes bearing the ITC brand name are allegedly being manufactured in Cambodia and smuggled into the country by air. The products are reportedly being sold in and around the airport area and distributed to different parts of the State.

The complaint stated that on Sunday at around 12.30 a.m., two persons allegedly arrived at Terminal 2 of the KIA and were involved in dispatching cartons of the counterfeit cigarettes to various locations.

The complainant has alleged that the accused misused the company's trademark and packaging design to market the fake products, causing financial losses and reputational damage to the company.

Based on the complaint, the police have registered a case. Officials said that efforts were under way to identify the accused and trace the source and distribution network of the counterfeit cigarettes.

Asia's second largest Amazon office is now in Bengaluru

The campus will support over 7,000 employees across e-commerce, operations, payments, technology, and seller services across India

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amazon, a Seattle-based technology, e-commerce and cloud computing firm, has opened its second largest corporate office in Asia at Kattigenahalli on the outskirts of Bengaluru on Monday.

Built on around five acres of land, the campus will support over 7,000 employees across e-commerce, operations, payments, technology, and seller services across India, according to the firm.

David Zapolsky, senior vice-president, global affairs & legal officer, Amazon, said, the speed of technology adoption and the ambition around AI in India were unmatched by any other country in the world. "There's a growth orientation here that is unmistakable, bold, forward-looking, and optimistic," Mr. Zapolsky said. Amazon invested $40 billion across all of its businesses in the country and also recently committed to investing $35 billion more by 2030 in the coming years, he said. Mr. Zapolsky also said, Amazon Now, the company's quick commerce outlet, designed to meet the needs of customers in dense, fast-paced urban centers in India was now making its way across the Middle East, North America, Europe, and Latin America.

Minister for Large & Medium Industries M.B. Patil, senior vice-president, global affairs & legal officer, Amazon, David Zapolsky, and others during the inauguration of the firm's new office in Bengaluru on Monday. PTI

M.B. Patil, Minister for Large & Medium Industries, said Amazon's continued investment in Bengaluru reflected India's growing role as a global technology and innovation hub.

"Large-scale campuses like this create more jobs, strengthen the local ecosystem and support India's digital economy," Mr. Patil added.

Centre allocates ₹2,245.30 crore to Karnataka under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Union government has allocated ₹2,245.30 crore to Karnataka under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) 2.0, with ₹83.53 crore ready to be released once the State submits a detailed action plan.

The information was given by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in response to an issue raised in the Lok Sabha by MP for Bengaluru Central P.C. Mohan.

According to the Ministry, out of the total ₹2,245.30 crore allocation, ₹709.30 crore has been earmarked for solid waste management. So far, projects worth ₹625.77 crore have been approved, and the State government has claimed ₹87.82 crore. An additional ₹83.53 crore will be released after the State prepares and submits a detailed action plan, gets it cleared by the State Level Technical Committee, and sends it to the Ministry for approval. Once approved, the funds must be transferred by the State government to urban local bodies for implementation.

Of the ₹2,245.30 crore allocation, ₹709.30 crore has been earmarked for solid waste management, according to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

For Bengaluru alone, projects worth ₹512.68 crore have already been cleared, of which the Centre's share is ₹128.16 crore. These projects include material recovery facilities with a combined capacity of 1,226.11 tonnes per day to sort and process waste, waste-to-energy plants capable of handling 460 tonnes per day, and sanitary landfills with a capacity of 800 tonnes per day.

Plans also include transfer stations that can manage 6,081.74 tonnes per day, remediation of 100.49 lakh tonnes of legacy waste, and the procurement of 24 mechanical road sweepers.

Mr. Mohan said substantial funds have already been allocated and approvals granted by the Centre, and that timely submission of the action plan by the State would ensure release of the remaining funds and speed up the development of modern waste management infrastructure in Bengaluru.

Doctor loses ₹22.25L in matrimonial app fraud

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 45-year-old medical practitioner has reportedly lost ₹22.25 lakh in an alleged matrimonial app fraud after being duped by a person posing as a Germany-based ophthalmologist on the app.

According to the complaint filed with the East Division Cyber Crime Police on Friday, the victim downloaded the app on December 20, 2025, and received a response from a profile that identified itself as Ganesh Barman, who claimed to be an ophthalmologist working in Berlin, Germany. The accused allegedly stated that he was divorced, living with his seven-year-old daughter who was studying in a boarding school, and were planning to relocate to India by February 2026 to establish a hospital in Delhi. The communication initially began through the app and later shifted to WhatsApp calls and messages from an international number. The accused reportedly told the victim that he had sent agents to handle the groundwork for the hospital project he had initiated in India. The complainant alleged that the accused later claimed his international bank account had become non-functional and sought her assistance in transferring funds to his "agents" in India. Between January 9 and January 24, she transferred money from her bank account to multiple bank accounts provided by the accused. She also sought financial assistance from her brother-in-law, who transferred funds. After realising that she had been cheated, the victim contacted the Cyber Crime Helpline 1930. A complaint has been registered, and further probe is under way.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. Y/E.29/2025-26/94
Dated : 12-02-2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Mavinkere (MVC) - Additional Power Supply arrangements to an extent of 12 KW Load to RR No. Harkiya Khal (HKL) - 18 at Mavinkere Station.	Rs. 8,41,704.87

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 11:00 Hrs on 05-03-2026
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/General
PUB/906/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26 Mysuru
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.
South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE NO. 07/2026 DATE : 18/02/2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender through IREPS only for supply of following items: Tender Closing Time: 10:30 Hrs.

Sl.	Tender No.	Description in Brief	Qty.	Tender Due on
1	45265003	Supply, Testing and Commissioning of RMPU Type-I for LHB EOG Coaches	67 Set	05.03.2026
2	12265002	3-Phase Traction Motors for EMU/MEMU, Motor	4 Nos.	16.03.2026
3	12265003	Traction Motor with pinion of make Alstom for 3-Phase MEMU	4 Nos.	19.03.2026
4	29265010	IGBT Based Traction Converter For 3 Phase Loco	1 Set	23.03.2026
5	46261064	Porcelain Bracket Insulator.	2189 Nos.	25.03.2026

For Tender No. 60259842 of Notice No.02/2026, the Due Date for opening of tender changed from 11.02.2026 to 04.03.2026
For Tender No. 52255005 of Notice No.03/2026, the Due Date for opening of tender changed from 11.02.2026 to 05.03.2026. Corrigendum No.2 issued on dt. 18.02.2026 is to be noted.
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/915/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.
South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

Nine posing as anti-corruption squad held for robbing businessman of ₹24L

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Devanahalli police have arrested nine members of a gang who allegedly posed as officials of a "Human Rights Protection and Anti-Corruption Squad" and robbed a 50-year-old businessman of ₹24 lakh in cash near Devanahalli earlier this month.

According to the police, the incident occurred on February 13 around 10 a.m. The complainant, K. Shankarappa, a resident of Virgonagar, had reportedly arranged ₹24 lakh after being assured of receiving ₹90 lakh in return as part of a financial deal.

As per the complaint, the accused arrived in a car bearing a board that read "Human Rights Protection and Anti-Corruption Squad" and questioned the complainant about the source of the cash.

Threatening him, they allegedly seized the ₹24 lakh in cash and fled the spot. The police then launched an investigation and arrested the accused between February 13 and 17. The accused have been identified as C. Krishnakumar Reddy, 50, a private bank employee from Yelahanka Old Town, S. Ahmed Shariff, 48, a real estate agent from Sulibele, Venugopal, 49, a petty shop owner from Bagepalli, allegedly a habitual offender with three criminal cases pending against him, Sampagirama, 47, a real estate agent and cook from Amruthahalli, Narayana Swamy, 52, a municipality worker from Shidlaghatta, Shivakumar K.V., 42, a mixer repair mechanic and driver from Ganjigunte, Chintamani, T.V. Murugeshan, 65, a mason from Madanapalli, Andhra Pradesh, Malayam Latif, 53, a real estate businessman from Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, and Venkatesh, 57, a cab driver from Avalahalli, Bengaluru city.

The police said they have recovered ₹14.6 lakh in cash, two cars, and 13 mobile phonesfrom the accused. One of the vehicles used in the crime bore a fake board displaying the name of the so-called squad.

19-year-old killed in accident

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 19-year-old boy, who was on his way to deliver food to his ailing father, was killed after a truck allegedly driven on the wrong side collided head-on with his two-wheeler near Dhananayakanahalli Main Road in Jnanabharathi on Saturday. The victim has been identified as Muniyappa, a resident of Dhananayakanahalli. He was working at an automobile showroom in Kengeri.

Muniyappa sustained severe head injuries in the impact. Passers-by rushed him to hospital, but he succumbed later.

The truck driver abandoned the vehicle and fled the spot. The Jnanabharathi Traffic Police have registered a case.

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ
ಟಿ. ಚೌಡಯ್ಯ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಕುಮಾರ ಪಾರ್ಕ್ ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು - 560 020.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಬೆಂಅಪ್ರಾ/ಸ.ಆ(ಮ&ಮ)/42/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:23.02.2026

ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಮಾನ್ಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಉಚ್ಚ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಆದೇಶದಂತೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕಾಯುಕ್ತರವರ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದಂತೆ ಕ್ರಮವಹಿಸಬೇಕಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪೂರ್ವ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರಂ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಭಿನ್ನಮಂಗಲ ಮನವರ್ತೆ ಕಾವಲ್ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಸರ್ವೆ ನಂ.1/3ರಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವ ನಿವೇಶನ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 891 ಮತ್ತು 892 ಅನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರು ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಡುವಂತೆ ಶ್ರೀ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ ಅಲಿಯಾಸ್ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪರವರ ವಾರಸುದಾರರು ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಚ್ಚ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕರಣವನ್ನು ದಾಖಲಿಸಿದ್ದು, ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಚ್ಚ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯವು Writ Petition No.25183 of 1991 C/W Writ Petition No.:26445 to 26447 of 1991 ರ ದಿನಾಂಕ:19.11.1998ರಂತೆ ಸದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ ಅಲಿಯಾಸ್ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ ರವರ ವಾರಸುದಾರರ ಹೆಸರಿಗೆ ಮರು ಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರು ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಆದೇಶಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಚ್ಚ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಆದೇಶದಂತೆ ಸದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನವು ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರು ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಕೋರಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದ ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರ ವಿವರಗಳು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಚ್ಚ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿತ ಪ್ರಕರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದ ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರ ವಿವರ		ಸದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರು ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದ ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರ ವಿವರ	
1	ಶ್ರೀ ವಿ.ದಾಮೋದರನ್ ಬಿನ್ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	1	ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಪಾರ್ವತಿ ಕೋಂ ಲೇಟ್ ಆರ್.ಕೆ.ನಾಗರಾಜು
	A) ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಮ್ಮ ಕೋಂ ಲೇಟ್ ದಾಮೋದರನ್	2	ಶ್ರೀ ಆರ್.ಗೋಪಿ (ಸುಧೀರ್ ರಾಯ್) ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ
	B) ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಯಶೋಧ (ಯಶೋಧ ದೇವಿ) ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ದಾಮೋದರನ್	3	ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಶಾರದಮ್ಮ ಕೋಂ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ
	C) ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಜು ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ದಾಮೋದರನ್	4	ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ.ವೆಂಕಟನಾರಾಯಣ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ
2	ಶ್ರೀ ವಿ. ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ಪ ಬಿನ್ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	5	ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ
	A) ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಕೆಂಪಮ್ಮ ಕೋಂ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ	6	ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಪುಷ್ಪಲತಾ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ. ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್
	B) ಶ್ರೀ ಆರ್.ಕೆ. ನಾಗರಾಜು ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ	7	ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಸುಶೀಲ.ಪಿ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್
	C) ಶ್ರೀ ಆರ್. ಸುಧೀರ ರಾಯ್ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ		
3	ಶ್ರೀ ವಿ.ವೆಂಕಟಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಬಿನ್ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ		
	A) ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಸಿದ್ದಮ್ಮ ಕೋಂ ಶ್ರೀ ವಿ.ವೆಂಕಟಸ್ವಾಮಿ		
	B) ಶ್ರೀ ವಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್ ಬಿನ್ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ		
4	ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಎಂ.ಶಾರದಮ್ಮ ಕೋಂ ಲೇಟ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ		
	A) ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ.ವೆಂಕಟನಾರಾಯಣ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ		
	B) ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ ಬಿನ್ ವಿ.ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ		

ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರು ಉಪ ತಹಶೀಲ್ದಾರರು, ವರ್ತೂರು ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪೂರ್ವ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆರವರಿಂದ ಪಡೆದು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿರುವ ವಂಶವೃಕ್ಷದ ವಿವರಗಳು

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ.	ಸದಸ್ಯರ ಹೆಸರು	ತಂದೆಯ ಹೆಸರು	ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರೊಂದಿಗಿನ ಸಂಬಂಧ	ವಯಸ್ಸು
1	ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	–	ಅಜ್ಜ	78
2	ಲೇಟ್ ಹುಲ್ಲೂರಮ್ಮ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	ಅಜ್ಜಿ	65
3	ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ	ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	ತಂದೆ	70
4	ಲೇಟ್ ಕೆಂಪಮ್ಮ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ	ತಾಯಿ	72
5	ಲೇಟ್ ಆರ್.ಕೆ. ನಾಗರಾಜ್	ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ	ಅಣ್ಣ	72
6	ಪಾರ್ವತಿ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ಆರ್.ಕೆ.ನಾಗರಾಜ್	ಅತ್ತಿಗೆ	71
7	ಗೋಪಿ.ಆರ್	ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ	ಸ್ವಯಂ	66
8	ಲೇಟ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ	ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಪ್ಪ	69
9	ಎಂ.ಶಾರದಮ್ಮ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಮ್ಮ	83
10	ಜಿ.ವೆಂಕಟನಾರಾಯಣ್	ಲೇಟ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ	ತಮ್ಮ	66
11	ಜಿ. ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್	ಲೇಟ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಪ್ಪ	ತಮ್ಮ	63
12	ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್	ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಪ್ಪ	75
13	ಲೇಟ್ ಪಿಳ್ಳಮ್ಮ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್	ಚಿಕ್ಕಮ್ಮ	40
14	ಪುಷ್ಪಲತ	ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್	ತಂಗಿ	65
15	ಸುಶೀಲ.ಪಿ	ಲೇಟ್ ವಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ್	ತಂಗಿ	58
16	ಲೇಟ್ ವೆಂಕಟಸ್ವಾಮಿ	ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಪ್ಪ	70
17	ಲೇಟ್ ಸಿದ್ದಮ್ಮ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ವೆಂಕಟಸ್ವಾಮಿ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಮ್ಮ	68
18	ಲೇಟ್ ಧರ್ಮೋದರನ್.ವಿ	ಲೇಟ್ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಪ್ಪ	64
19	ಲೇಟ್ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಮ್ಮ	ವೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಲೇಟ್ ಧರ್ಮೋದರನ್.ವಿ	ಚಿಕ್ಕಮ್ಮ	65
20	ನಟರಾಜ.ಡಿ	ಲೇಟ್ ಧರ್ಮೋದರನ್.ವಿ	ತಮ್ಮ	69
21	ಯಶೋಧ ದೇವಿ	ಲೇಟ್ ಧರ್ಮೋದರನ್.ವಿ	ತಂಗಿ	50

ಮಾನ್ಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಉಚ್ಚ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಆದೇಶದಂತೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕಾಯುಕ್ತರವರ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದಂತೆ ಕ್ರಮವಹಿಸಬೇಕಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ತತ್ಸಬಂಧ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪೂರ್ವ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರಂ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಭಿನ್ನಮಂಗಲ ಮನವರ್ತೆ ಕಾವಲ್ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಸರ್ವೆ ನಂ.1/3ರಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವ ನಿವೇಶನ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:891 ಮತ್ತು 892 ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀ ಜಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪರವರ ವಾರಸುದಾರರ ಹೆಸರಿಗೆ ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರು ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಮಾಡುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಈ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಇತರೆ ಯಾರಾದರೂ ಕ್ಲೈಮುದಾರರು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಸದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರ ಹೆಸರಿಗೆ ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರುಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಮಾಡುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಯಾರಿಗಾದರೂ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆ ಅಥವಾ ತಕರಾರು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಹೊರಡಿಸಿದ 15 ದಿನಗಳೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಸೂಕ್ತ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಅರ್ಜಿಯನ್ನು ಸಹಾಯಕ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು, ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರುಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವಂತೆ ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಸಹಾಯಕ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು, ಮರುಹಂಚಿಕೆ/ಮರುಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ, ಬೆಂಅಪ್ರಾ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

SREENIDHI SOUHARDA SAHAKARI BANK NIYAMITHA
113, R. V. Road, V. V. Puram, Bangalore- 560 004
Phone: 080-25722152/153,Mob:9482422153,
E-mail: sssbn2bmh@sreenidhibank.com

PUBLIC AUCTION SALE NOTICE
Sale of Immovable Property Mortgaged to Bank Under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002..
(No 54 of 2002) - SARFAESI ACT

Smt. K. Hema & Sri. S.P.Raju

Whereas **Smt. Hema.K** W/o S.P.Raju, Residing Flat at No.319, Radiant Shine Apartment, Opp. Indian Oil Petrol Bunk, Yelenahalli Village, Begur Koppa Road, Bangalore-560068 has borrowed monies from **Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, Bommanahalli Branch,** situated at No.279, 1st Floor, 16th Cross, 5th Main, 7th Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore – 560102 and as on 23/02/2026 she owes a sum of **Rs.13,41,711/- (Rupees Thirteen lakhs Forty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eleven) only with further interest @ 12.50%** per annum and costs there on.

Whereas the Authorised Officer of the Bank has issued notice under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and thereafter has taken possession of the property owned and mortgaged by **Sri. S.P.Raju S/o Papanna** mortgaged to the bank and decided to sell the property, described in Schedule "A" herein below, on **'AS IS WHERE IS BASIS'** under rules 8 & 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

DETAILS OF SALE:

Place of Auction: Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, #113, R.V.Road, V.V. Puram, Bangalore-560004.
Date/Day & time of auction: 25/03/2026 (Wednesday) at 11:00 AM.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEDULE PROPERTY
SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Vacant site.No.83 carved out of converted land in Sy.No.153/9, 153/19, 153/20 and 153/21, situated in the Layout known as "SLN City" at Thavarekere Village, Thavarekere Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore,,measuring East to West 12 meters, North to South 9 meters,totally measuring 108 Sq.mtrs, and bounded on on East by: Site No.74, West by: Road, North by:Site No.82 and South by: Site No.84.

Reserved Price : Rs.13,00,000/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs) Only.

Terms & Conditions of Auction:

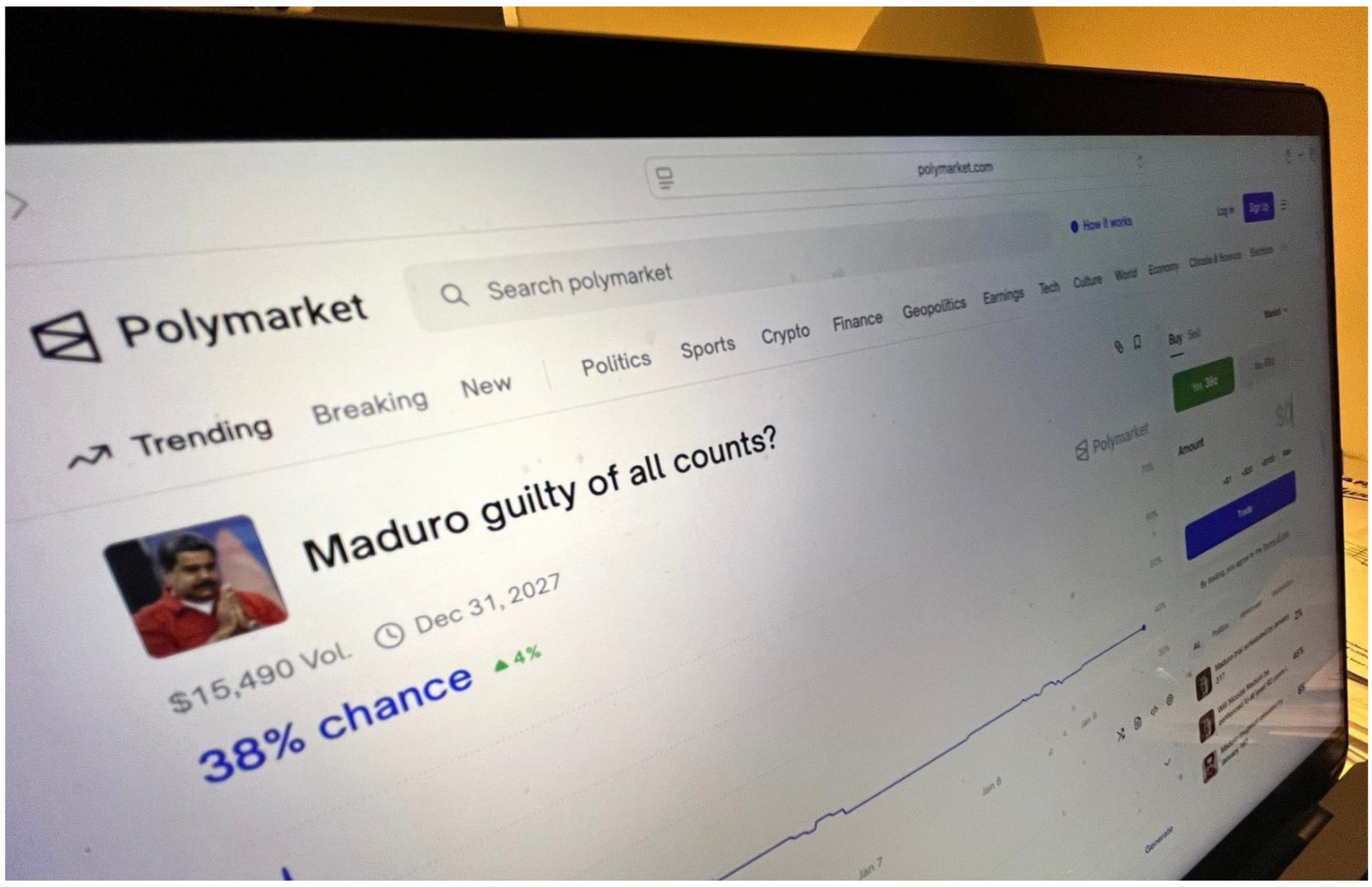
1) The above schedule property is proposed for public auction on AS IS WHERE IS BASIS.
2) For participating in the auction, the intending bidders have to deposit 10% of reserve price of the property by Bankers cheque/Demand Draft favouring **"The Authorised Officer, Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha"**, Payable at Bangalore which is refundable, if the bid is not successful.
3) The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the bid amount immediately on the sale being knocked down in his favour and the balance within 15 days. Payment to be made only in the form of cash or bankers cheque/ DD drawn in favour of **"The Authorised Officer, Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha".**
4) Incase the successful bidder fails to deposit 25% of bid amount immediately on the sale being knocked down in his favour and the balance amount within 15 days, the entire deposit made by the bidder shall be forfeited by the Authorised Officer without any notice.
5) The successful bidder would bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance such as Stamp duty, Registration fee etc., as applicable as per law.
6) The Authorised officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Govt. or anybody in respect of the property under sale.
7) The Authorised Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject the bid or adjourn/ postpone the auction without assigning any reason therefore.
8) The sale is subject to confirmation by the Bank.
9) The auction of the property will be made as per the above order or at the discretion of the Authorised Officer.

For inspection of property, the intending bidders may contact, Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, Bommanahalli Branch, No.279, 1st Floor, 16th Cross, 5th Main, 6th Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore-560102 during the office hours or may contact at telephone No.080 25722152/153/ 9482422153/ 9902335098.

Date : 23/02/2026
Place : Bangalore

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha

CACHE



Dangerous game: The Polymarket prediction market website on January 9 in Philadelphia. AP

The explosive rise and inherent risks of prediction markets

Polymarket and Kalshi, two popular prediction market platforms, allow users to bet on anything from Bitcoin prices to bombings, raising a host of legal and ethical red flags. Such prediction markets are also sparking interest in India

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

In a booming section of the Internet, gamblers do not restrict their bets to sports teams and horses. They also bet on the possibility of Israel launching strikes against Gaza, the U.S. election results, the possible return of Jesus Christ, and the number of tweets Elon Musk might post on a given day. These bets are placed on prediction market platforms like Kalshi and Polymarket, where speculators bet on the outcomes of real world events including wars, the Oscars, ongoing court cases, gold prices, government proceedings, and even the local weather.

How do prediction markets work?

A prediction market is a platform where users buy units of a 'probable event' to make a profit when that event happens (or not). Generally, users can fund their trading accounts through crypto, credit/debit cards, or bank transfers. A platform fee may or may not be charged. Once set up, users can browse topics such as science, sports, culture, finance, etc. to find an event they want to bet on. Kalshi and Polymarket both claim to be the largest prediction market platforms. For transactions, Polymarket uses the USDC stablecoin – a non-official cryptocurrency pegged to the value of the U.S. dollar – via the Polygon network.

Take a real question from Polymarket, as of February 4: "Will anyone be jailed over Epstein disclosures?" Here, the answer 'Yes' was worth 19 cents at the time, while 'No' was worth 82 cents. Clearly, users were betting on the latter outcome. Users choose to buy 'Yes' or 'No' "shares," and these values may continue to change based on new developments. A Polymarket calculator showed that buying $100 worth of 'Yes' shares meant the user would get $499.43 in case anyone was jailed due to the Epstein disclosures. If they bought $100 worth of 'No' shares, they would get $121.95 in case the situation panned out as they predicted. Remember the "unit" prices can change drastically at any time. Users can also choose to sell their "shares" before the stipulated deadline, in case they want to cash in their profits or cut their losses.

Prediction markets are surging in popularity because of their design, ease, and social media virality. Kalshi and Polymarket give speculators the confidence to bet on real-world events they are familiar with, instead of forcing them to research unfamiliar asset classes or learn about technical investment options and indicators. Zooming out, prediction markets claim that such economies are focused on crowdsourced truth or crowd wisdom, and that there is less chance of bias and deception, since a large number of people bet on outcomes they truly believe will happen.

Regarding the controversial West Asia-related prediction markets that allow bets on future air strikes, Polymarket's website stated: "After discussing with those directly affected by the attacks, who had dozens of questions, we realized that prediction markets could give them the answers they needed in ways TV news and X could not".

Kalshi tells its users that they "have the ability to make the same smart trades and strategic investments that were once the exclusive domain of the financial elite".

Why are they being criticised?

Those opposing prediction market platforms list risks including the promotion of irresponsible gambling, people being encouraged to bet on violence, the rapid spread of false news, and the potential for insider trading due to powerful individuals becoming involved in sensitive markets where privileged information results in profits.

In January 2025, Kalshi announced that Donald Trump Jr. had joined as a strategic advisor. Mr. Trump Jr. claimed on X that people close to him used Kalshi during the election night to know that Mr. Trump had won "hours ahead of the fake news media". In August, media outlets reported that the Trump Jr.-linked venture capital firm 1789 Capital invested in Polymarket, and that he had joined its advisory board.

Both Kalshi and Polymarket are also active on social media platforms like Elon Musk-owned X and Meta-owned Instagram, where they post clickbait-style news snippets to their huge followings and depict their users' bets as though they are fact-based statistics.

Moreover, both Polymarket and Kalshi have published fake news in the past. In fact, Amazon's Jeff Bezos once disputed Polymarket's claim that he asked Gen Z entrepreneurs to get "real world jobs" at McDonalds or Palantir before starting a business. Meanwhile, the *Axios* outlet reported that Kalshi falsely posted about U.S. and Denmark discussions, leading to an official clarification from Denmark.

Are prediction markets regulated?

This is a grey area. Prediction markets are regulated in some jurisdictions while banned in others. Kalshi reported it was regulated by the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), but it faces restrictions and legal challenges in multiple U.S. states. Meanwhile, 33 countries are completely restricted from accessing Polymarket, including the U.S., Germany, the U.K., and Singapore.

Prediction markets are also sparking interest in India. In recent months, multiple Reddit users have created threads to ask whether betting via platforms such as Polymarket is legal in India. Other Redditors explored ways to make money off prediction markets without attracting legal scrutiny.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

On February 24, 1920, Adolf Hitler announced the Nazi Party's 25-point programme in Munich. A quiz on Hitler's various security groups

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

In September 1919, Adolf Hitler joined the German Workers' Party (DAP), a small nationalist group in Munich founded by _____ _____. On February 24, 1920, the DAP renamed itself 'NSDAP', later colloquially called the Nazi Party. Fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 2

In 1921-22, the NSDAP set up a paramilitary wing called the Sturmabteilung, or SA for short, and used it to intimidate its opponents and to stage rallies. What was the colloquial name for members of this wing, which was based on the colour of their uniforms?

QUESTION 3

Hitler didn't trust the Sturmabteilung, so in 1923 he created a separate unit in charge of his personal security. However, this unit was abolished after the event known as X that year, failed and landed Hitler in prison. Name X.

QUESTION 4

In 1925, Hitler created Y, whose name was German for 'Protection Squadron'. For Hitler's purposes, it replaced the Sturmabteilung. Thanks to the leadership of Heinrich Himmler from 1929, it went on to become one of the most powerful and feared organisations in Nazi Germany. Name Y.

QUESTION 5

Name the event of February 23, 1933, that Hitler used as a pretext to arrest communists en masse, skewing the elections on March 5 in the NSDAP's favour and eventually leading to Hitler getting the power to make laws without parliament.

Visual question:
Name this leader who, despite his dislike of Hitler, made choices that sowed political instability and allowed Hitler to consolidate power.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. Name Rajinikanth's debut film. **Ans: *Apoorva Raagangal***
2. The names of Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth's characters in *16 Vayathinile*. **Ans: Kamal was Gopalakrishnan aka 'Chappani' while Rajinikanth played the villain 'Parattai'**
3. The Tamil version of the Telugu *Andamaina Anubhavam*. **Ans: *Ninaithale Inikkum***
4. The last time the two shared the screen as full-fledged co-leads was in this 1979 fantasy film. **Ans: *Allauddinum Albhutha Vilakkum***
5. Rajinikanth's first full-length comedy film. **Ans: *Thillu Mullu***
6. In their only Hindi film to date, this legend enacted the role of Kamal's sibling. **Ans: *Geraftaar* and Amitabh Bachchan**
7. This person is directing and composing the music for the reunion film. **Ans: Nelson Dilipkumar and Anirudh Ravichander**

Visual: Name this acclaimed K. Balachander work. **Ans: *Moondru Mudichu***

Early Birds: Sunil Madhavan| Arun Kumar Singh| Tito Shiladitya| Renuka Jadhav| R. Sivakumar

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

What is the meaning of "roller coaster ride"? (Rani Gurunathan, Erode, Tamil Nadu)

A roller coaster is a ride which one finds in many amusement parks. It is a small railway which goes up and down steep slopes and sharp curves. As it comes down the steep slopes, the roller coaster suddenly and sharply changes direction, often causing the people in the carriages to scream in excitement or fear. When you say something is a roller coaster ride, it means it is full of unexpected ups and downs. A situation which is impossible to control is often referred to as a roller coaster ride. Here are a few examples.

Life with our new boss has been a roller coaster ride.

Anand's relationship with his father has been a constant roller coaster ride.

What is the meaning of "vertically challenged"? (M. Mohamed Hussain, Nellai District, Tamil Nadu)

People who are short, generally, don't like to be told that they are short. When you tell someone that he is short, he feels hurt. If you are talking to someone who is short and want to refer to his/her height without hurting his/her feelings, you can say that he/she is "vertically challenged". It is the politically correct term.

Can the word "any" be used with plural nouns? (S. Manikantan, Chandra Layout, Bangalore)

Yes, it can. When the word "any" is followed by a countable noun, the noun is usually plural. Here are a few examples. If you have any questions, please talk to our Manager. We don't need to buy any cassettes. Do you have any one rupee coins?

What is the difference between "occupation" and "designation"? (V. K. Vithal, Gulbarga, Karnataka)

The word "occupation" refers to the kind of work you do; it refers to your job. You may be a teacher, an accountant, a salesperson, a police officer, etc. These are all examples of different kinds of occupation. The word "designation", on the other hand, refers to the title that you have been given. For example, when you join the university as a teacher, you may join as "Lecturer". Lecturer is a designation, it tells other people where you are in the teaching hierarchy. When you get a promotion, you become a Reader, and later a Professor. Your designation changes from Lecturer to Reader, etc. But the occupation of all three – Lecturer, Reader, and Professor – is the same – teaching.

When you talk about the "chemistry" between two people, what are you talking about? (N. Balasubramanian)

When you refer to the "chemistry" between two individuals, you are talking about the attraction and understanding between them. Uma refused to marry Satguru because there was no chemistry between them. My boss and I have the wrong chemistry. We just can't stand each other. The first time they met, there was an immediate chemistry.

Published in The Hindu on September 7, 1999.

Word of the day

Unsolicited:
not requested or sought

Synonyms: unasked-for

Usage: *He keeps giving me and my friends unsolicited advice.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/unsolicitedpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ʌnsəˈlɪsɪtɪd/

CORRECTION: In the article 'Why are apple traders in J&K worried?' published in these columns on February 23, the extent of land under apple orchards should read as 1.73 lakh hectares, and not as published. The error is regretted.

‘It’s for RGUHS to decide on providing key to subjective questions in MBBS exams’

It is not open to this court to evolve a method for evaluating answer scripts, says the High Court

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A Division Bench of the High Court of Karnataka has now given liberty to the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) to take an appropriate decision on providing the key or model answers to subjective questions during the evaluation of answer scripts of the MBBS course, without being influenced by certain observations made by a single judge, which were binding in nature.

‘Not firm opinion’

“We clarify that nothing stated in the single judge’s order is to be construed as a firm opinion on whether model answer keys containing key phrases and key terms are required to be provided to the examiners for the evaluation of answers to subjective questions. The university is at liberty to take an appropriate decision uninfluenced by the observations,” the Bench observed.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C.M. Poonacha passed an order on the appeals filed by the RGUHS, which had challenged the July 30, 2025 judgment passed by the single judge.

“In our view, it would not be apposite for this court to examine as to how answers to questions in a particular subject are required to be evaluated as it must necessarily be left to the knowledge and wisdom of the experts,” the Bench said.

The court noted that the RGUHS’s syndicate and academic councils have already deliberated the issue of providing key or model answers even to subjective questions, and that the National Medical Commission (NMC) was initially in support of providing key answers containing “key words” and “key phrases/terms” that must be found in students’ answer scripts as it would serve as the basis/guide for the evaluators/examiners when awarding marks.

NMC’s alert

However, the NMC subsequently altered its stand and contended that subjective answers cannot be evaluated merely on the basis of key phrases or terms used in the answers given by the students, the Bench pointed out.

The court noted RGUHS’s argument that “the answers to medical science questions are evaluated based on students’ understanding and knowledge” and that “their knowledge cannot be evaluated on the anvil, whether they have used key phrases or terms in the language used to express their answers”. The Bench said this contention is “not insubstantial”.

Third evaluation

On the directions issued by the single judge asking the RGUHS to refer the answer scripts of the petitioner-students, who were in the first year MBBS court of 2023-2024, for a third evaluation, the Bench said that there is no provision for valuation by a third evaluator in the 2022 ordinance governing the Central Assessment Programme (CAP) for theory paper assessment in all under-graduate health science courses of the university. “It is not open to this court to evolve a method for evaluating answer scripts and to supplant the method provided under the ordinance. Evaluation of the answer scripts is covered by a statutory prescription, and therefore, it is neither apposite nor permissible for the Court to issue directions regarding evaluation which run contrary to the statute,” the Bench said, while setting aside the order for a third evaluation issued by the single judge.

Surprise raid conducted at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

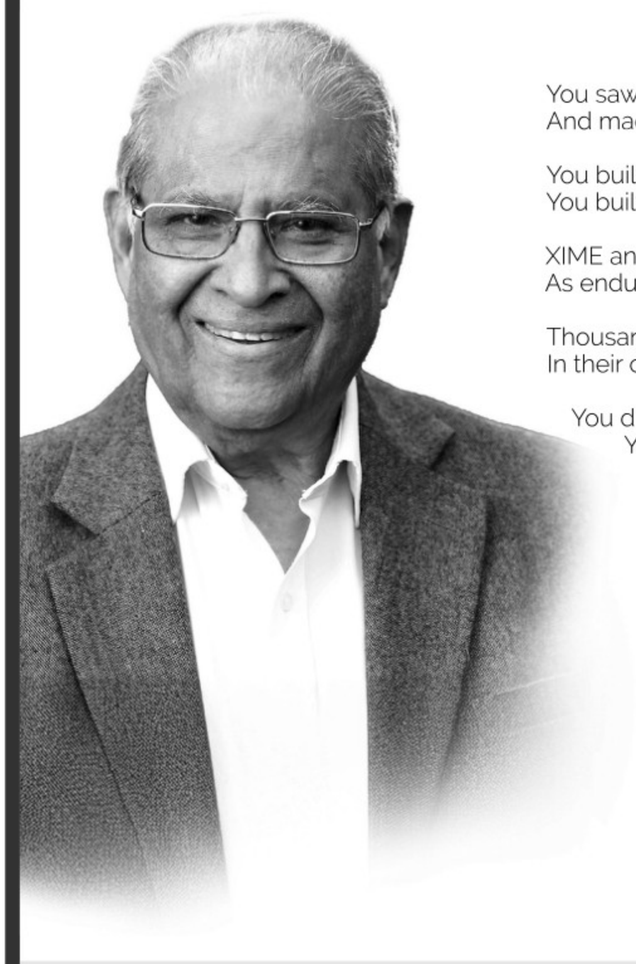
Acting on information about the alleged use of mobile phones and possession of prohibited items by inmates, the Central Crime Branch of the Bengaluru City Police conducted a surprise raid at the Central Prison Parappana Agrahara on Saturday. During the operation, the officials seized 58 prohibited items and cash amounting to ₹9,340. The items were recovered from various barracks, and 28 undertrails have been booked for possessing the banned items.

A case has been registered at the jurisdictional police station.

Chevalier Prof. J Philip

21 May 1936 - 21 Feb 2026

You Chose A Higher Calling



You saw promise in young minds.
And made it your mission to shape them.

You built more than institutions.
You built ideals. Value by value.

XIME and XIS stand today,
As enduring symbols of your vision.

Thousands carry your imprint.
In their careers. And in their character.

You didn’t just raise the bar for education.
You defined it.

You are, and always will be,
A legend. A light. A lasting legacy.

Rest in peace, Dear Sir.

Viewing
24 February 2026 | 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Xavier Institute of Management & Entrepreneurship, Hosur Road, Phase II, Electronic City, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560100

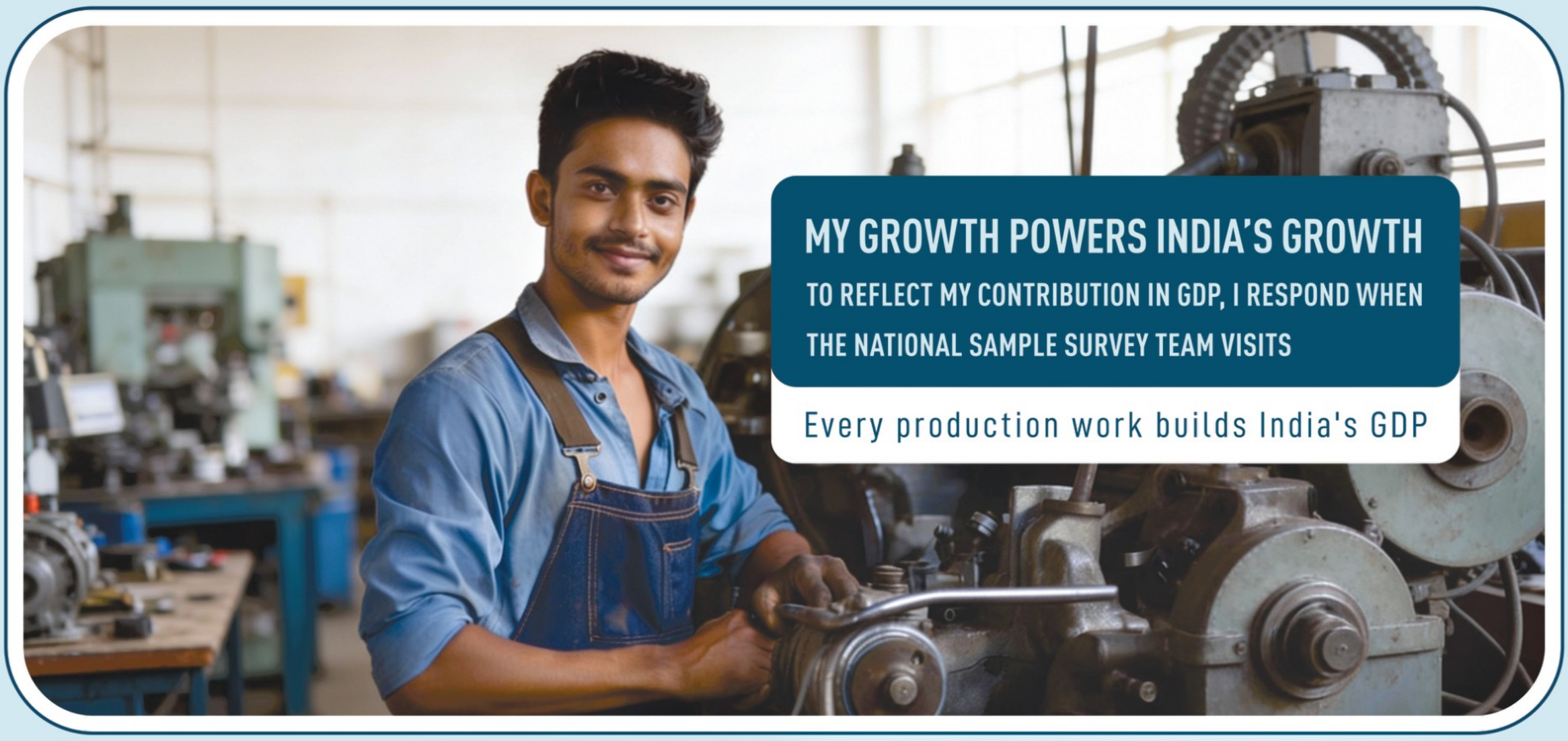
Funeral service
24 February 2026
Funeral Mass | St. Anthony’s Friary Church, Hosur Road | 2:00 pm
Burial | St. Patrick’s Cemetery

XIS Inspired Learning
XIME INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

XIME Shaping Future Leaders
Bangalore | Kochi | Chennai

Government of India
Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
सत्यमेव जयते

DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT



UPDATING GDP BASE YEAR TO 2022-23:

• INCORPORATING NEW DATA SOURCES • IMPROVED METHODOLOGY • FOR BETTER DATA BASED DECISION MAKING

Release Date: 27 February 2026

Please cooperate with NSO enumerators when they come for survey. Your identity will be kept confidential.

CBC 39101/13/0010/2526

mospi.gov.in @GoIStats /goistats GoIStats Ministry of Statistics & PI

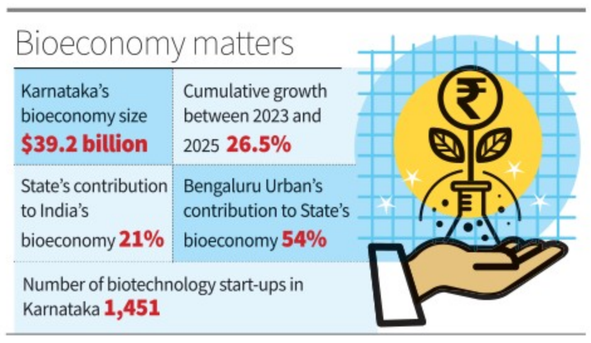
State contributes one-fifth to national bioeconomy: Report

Between 2023 and 2025, the State's bioeconomy expanded from $31 billion to $39.2 billion, representing a cumulative rise of 26.5%; Karnataka also saw 218 new biotech start-ups being added in 2025 alone

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka's bioeconomy, a $39 billion enterprise, contributes over one-fifth to the national bioeconomy and over 10% to the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) as of 2025, observes a newly launched report. The Karnataka BioEconomy Report 2025, prepared by the Association of Biotechnology-Led Enterprises (ABLE) for the Karnataka government, was released on Monday.

Minister for Information Technology, Biotechnology and Rural Development, Priyank Kharge and others releasing the Karnataka BioEconomy Report 2025 in Bengaluru on Monday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Production-oriented
Between 2023 and 2025, the State's bioeconomy expanded from $31 billion to $39.2 billion, representing a cumulative rise of 26.5%.The growth has been attributed to a robust biopharmaceutical base , rapid bioindustrial diversification, and strong bioservices integration.

"Karnataka's innovation ecosystem – anchored in research institutions, start-ups, and global R&D centres– has transitioned from being research-heavy to production-oriented and globally competitive," reads the report, which pins the State's contribution to India's bioeconomy at 20.63%. According to the report, Karnataka's bioeconomy accounted for 10.51% of the GSDP in 2025. This is more than twice the share of the biotech sector to India's GDP (4.57%).

"This positions biotechnology not merely a scientific discipline but as an economic pillar central to the State's development model," notes the report.

Start-up numbers
Karnataka's biotech start-up ecosystem continued to grow, with 218 new biotech start-ups being added in 2025 alone, marking the highest annual start-up additions in three years. With this,the cumulative number of biotech start-ups in the State stands at 1,451,up from 1,233 in 2024.

The State currently holds a 12-13% share of the national biotechnology start-up pool and more than75%of them startups are focused on life sciences and health-tech. Bengaluru accounts for about 54% of the biotech start-ups.

Mysuru contributes around 8.7% to the bioeconomy of the State, while Belagavi and Dakshina Kannada together account for over 9%.

On the investment front, between January 2024 and October 2025, Karnataka attracted$1.14 billion across around 40 deals.

Collaboration critical
"The rapid expansion of biomanufacturing shows a sector moving decisively from research to global-scale production. Continued collaboration between government, industry and academia will be critical to sustaining Karnataka's leadership in India's next phase of bio-led growth," said G.S. Krishnan, honorary president, ABLE.

Priyank Kharge, Minister for Information Technology, Biotechnology and Rural Development, noted that biotechnology is no longer confined to laboratories, but is now a central driver of economic growth, industrial innovation and societal impact.

"Our focus is on building a full-spectrum biomanufacturing economy by supporting deep-tech start-ups, strengthening innovation infrastructure, and ensuring that growth reaches beyond Bengaluru,"he said.

Chief Minister asks Centre to abolish VB-G RAM G Act

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday urged the Centre to abolish the newly enacted Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevik Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, and re-implement the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Asking the Centre to re-establish the right to employment and right to self-governance for gram panchayats, the Chief Minister said that the Centre should declare a uniform minimum wage of ₹400 per day for rural employment. The demand came at the 'MGNREGA Bachao Andolan' organised by the Congress at Chickballapur.

"Until the demands are met, our andolan will not stop. It will continue like the protest of the farmers, who fought against the three farm laws (introduced by the BJP government)," he added.

Appealing to people to participate in the andolan, Mr. Siddaramaiah said 12.16 crore workers were receiving employment under MGNREGA, of which 53% were women, 17% Scheduled Castes, and 11% Scheduled Tribes.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala and other leaders at the 'MGNREGA Bachao Andolan' in Chickballapur on Monday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The Centre has snatched away the right of employment of workers. Now, contractors, who were not in the MGNREGA, are indirectly part of the VB-G RAM G Act, panchayats have lost autonomy to decide on work to be undertaken, and employment will not be available throughout the year."

The Congress general secretary in charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala accused the BJP and the Janata Dal (Secular) of burdening poor people, farmers, and workers. "We have to ask the BJP and the JD(S) as to why the MGNREGA, on which 11 crore families were dependent, has been finished off, and why their livelihood and employment had been snatched. The BJP and the JD(S) are snatching food and money from your pockets."

Stating that the Congress government had implemented guarantee schemes in Karnataka when income was going down and prices were rising, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said that the Congress will not allow the MGNREGA to be destroyed. "Like how attempts are being made to snatch voting rights, food and livelihood are being taken away. One who fights will win, and there will be no fear of losing. When attempts are being made to remove the name of Mahatma Gandhi, we have decided to affix every gram panchayat with his name."

'India has handled the U.S. relatively better than others'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

India's overall diplomatic relationship with various countries in recent times has been fairly impressive, D.B. Venkatesh Varma, chair, 2026-27 UN Advisory Board on Disarmament, has said.

Mr. Varma, replying to questions after delivering a special lecture on 'India's Strategic Autonomy in a Changing World', organised by the National Institute of Advanced Studies in honour of Ambassador P.S. Raghavan and his legacy, said, India had maintained its relationships with Russia and also handled the U.S. relatively better than most countries.

"It is not just a test of diplomacy it is also a test of leverage. This combination we have achieved in a manner where we have maintained our relationships with Russia. We have also taken the storm, it is rather a turbulent period of our relationship with the U.S. We have it relatively better than many other countries. It's not easy to deal with the U.S. today."

He further added that India had subsequently strengthened our relationship with the European Union, France and Brazil.

Record impressive
"We are going to have the Prime Minister of Canada coming soon. We will be hosting the BRICS summit so I would say the overall record is fairly impressive, of course there are multiple challenges," he added.

Mr. Varma said that the internal security situation in India had improved over a period of time and this had a rebound effect on the productivity of the country, not just in economic terms.

"You see the instances of left-wing violence have been cut down considerably. Unfortunately for a few tragic incidents here and there acts of terrorism have also substantially cut down. There is a general peace in the country. I would not say that there is full peace and stability in the country but over a period of time internal security has improved," Mr. Varma said.

Siddaramaiah urged to accept and implement Social and Educational Survey report

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A delegation of Backward Classes leaders from the Congress, who met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as part of pre-Budget meetings, urged the government to accept the Social and Educational Survey report from the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes at the earliest.

A source, present in the meeting, said that urging the government to accept the report was one of the over 20 demands from the Backward Classes community that was presented to the Chief Minister. "We do not want the Madhusudan R. Naik Commission to go the way of the H. Kantharaj Commission, which was rejected because the data became old."

A file photo of enumerators collecting data for the Social and Educational Survey in Bengaluru.

Those present included several sitting and former legislators, and senior leaders from the community.

Internal reservation

Later, a delegation of Dalit leaders who met the Chief Minister is learnt to have raised the internal reservation issue, which is now in court and has left public recruitments hanging. It is learnt that the demand for internal reservation even in allocation of funds was made along with implementation of internal reservation in promotion, backlog appointments, and in appointment of casual workers.

The demand came on a day when hundreds of people across the State who are fighting for implementation of internal reservation among Dalits staged a State-wide protest with similar demands. Among others, they have demanded 1% reservation to nomadic communities besides a separate development corporation and a special package.

A demand for a separate development corporation for converted Buddhists also came up during the meeting. The delegation also demanded removal of 7 (C) provision from the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan and Tribal Plan Act to prevent diversion of funds.

BJP delegation
A delegation from the BJP on Monday met the Governor seeking "protection for the interest of 101 scheduled castes" and accused the Congress government of inept handling of the internal reservation issue.

In a petition, the BJP said that though 18 months had passed since the Supreme Court verdict, Karnataka is yet to implement the internal reservation while States such as Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Haryana had done so.

MLA warns of power cut to helicopter assembly unit

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during the inauguration of the helicopter assembly unit in Vemagal on February 17.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Kottur Manjunath, Kolar Congress MLA, has threatened to cut power supply to the Tata-Airbus helicopter assembly unit in Vemagal, if it doesn't draw power from a separate industrial feeder.

His threat comes after the Tata Advanced Systems' Final Assembly Line was virtually inaugurated on February 17 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and France President Emmanuel Macron.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh was present at Vemagal.

The MLA argued on Monday: "We have given our farmers' land to the company. It has been a year since the company started its work. The company, which should have received electricity from an industrial feeder line, is still receiving electricity from Vemagal. This has caused problems for farmers and locals. Therefore, the company has already been instructed to receive electricity from the industrial feeder. If the electricity feeder is not changed soon, the farmers' tractors will be driven in and the electricity connection will be cut off."

First-time MLAs' letter to Congress high command seeking Cabinet berths surfaces

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An undated letter, purportedly signed by 31 first-time Congress legislators demanding at least five Cabinet berths during the proposed reshuffle, surfaced on Monday, even as the Congress government battles an internal crisis over leadership.

The letter, believed to be written last year, has been confirmed to be authentic by several legislators who had signed it.

It has been addressed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal, and AICC general secretary in charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala.

The letter has been signed by legislators who have identified with camps of both the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister, as well as those who are believed to be neutral.

While the idea of a Cabinet reshuffle is being apparently pushed by the Chief Minister to send a signal that he is firmly in the saddle, it is believed that the Deputy Chief Minister, who is seeking rotation of power, is opposed to the idea. Currently, of the 34 Cabinet berths, two are vacant owing to the resignations of B. Nagendra and K.N. Rajanna.

Pointing out that 38 first-time legislators have been elected on the Congress ticket, the letter said that none of them had been accommodated during the Cabinet formation. The letter sought Cabinet berths to "young, dynamic and proactive" first-time legislators. It said that accommodating them legislators was not new since in several States, first-time legislators have been made Chief Ministers and cabinet Ministers, and a mix of young and experienced always provides the right balance.

"All of us are strongly connected to the Congress ideology and strive to ensure clean, transparent and credible governance enabling us to bounce back to power in 2028," it read.

'Opposition raking up Dalit CM issue'

G. Parameshwara

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Home Minister G. Parameshwara said that the Opposition is raking up the Dalit Chief Minister issue to cover up its own shortcomings.

"Is the Chief Minister not running the administration? He has been discussing with Ministers and officials for the last 12 days on the Budget preparation," he said, adding that the Opposition is unnecessarily bringing out the Dalit Chief Minister issue.

"Only the Congress can make a Dalit the Chief Minister. Who else can? The high command will take a decision at the right time," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Department of Health & Family Welfare
Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society
Arogya Soudha, 4th Floor, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560023.
Tel: 080-29557021, email: pdksaps@gmail.com

No.KSAPS/PRC/5/2025-26 Dated: 23.02.2026

Invitation for short term tenders (Two Cover) (Call-2) through e-Procurement

Short term Tenders (Two Cover) (Call-2) are invited for supply of Barcode and Scanner machines to ART Centers under E-Procurement System. For more details are available at website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Last date for submission of tender on 10/03/2026 at 5.30pm.

Sd/- Project Director
Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5828/Zen/2025-26

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE
DEATH ANNIVERSARIES
REMEMBRANCE

Dr. DEBASHISH DANDA
Founder
Dept. of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology CMC Vellore.
Remembered everyday since 24.02.2024
Family, Friends, Students & Patients

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
Bengaluru: 98455 29981,
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575,
from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Online booking: www.thehinduads.com
DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

Final poll rolls after SIR show Tamil Nadu has 5.67 crore voters

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

TN Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Tamil Nadu had more than 5.67 crore electors as the Election Commission of India published the final electoral rolls of the State on Monday after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise.

The list includes 2,89,60,838 women, 2,77,38,925 men, and 7,617 third-gender electors. Since the publication of the draft rolls last December, 27.53 lakh eligible electors have been included and 4.23 lakh ineligible electors deleted. In total, the electorate went up by about 24 lakh since the draft rolls were published.

About 74 lakh entries have been deleted since October last when the EC froze the rolls that had 6.41 crore electors. When the draft rolls were published in December last year, there were 5.43 crore voters. During the claims and objections period, 27,85,195 Form 6 applications were submitted and 27,53,796 were accepted. For objections and deletions, 4,38,425 forms were submitted and 4,23,172 of them were accepted.

Addressing a press conference, Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik said Sholinganallur Assembly constituency in Chengalpattu district continued to have the highest number of electors with 5,36,991 and Harbour Assembly constituency in Chennai district has the lowest with 1,16,896.

SC allows parallel inquiry into Tirumala laddu row

The one-man panel for administrative inquiry initiated by the A.P. govt. will not come in the way of criminal proceedings in which multiple chargesheets have already been filed, says Supreme Court

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The SIT report on the Tirumala laddu adulteration row had outlined serious irregularities and alleged deliberate misconduct. FILE PHOTO

The Supreme Court on Monday said an administrative inquiry conducted into the lapses which led to the alleged adulteration of the sacred Tirumala 'Srivari laddu prasadam' cannot be said to either overlap or interfere with the criminal proceedings into the affair.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said the one-man committee administrative inquiry initiated by the Andhra Pradesh government would not come in the way of criminal proceedings in which multiple chargesheets have already been filed in court.

The administrative inquiry was initiated to identify the lapses which led to the omissions in the preparation of the laddus. The probe would also delve into the nature of the slip-up, the persons responsible and consequences thereof.

"Such an administrative inquiry, in our considered opinion, cannot be said to overlap the criminal proceedings, which already culminated into a chargesheet and supplementary chargesheet," Chief Justice Kant observed.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing in the case, said the criminal probe was complete. The FIR in the laddu adulteration was registered in 2024. Eventually, the investigation was entrusted to a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of officers and agencies in April of the same year.

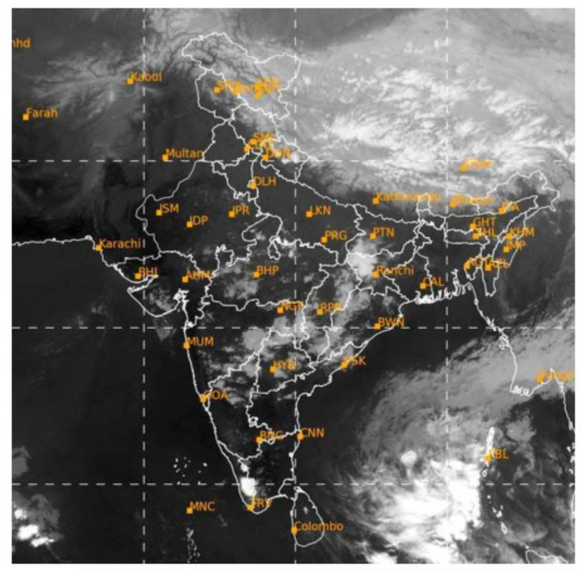
The court was hearing a plea by Subramanian Swamy, who contended that a parallel investigation by the State would undercut the criminal proceedings. Mr. Mehta said the SIT had found administrative lapses during its criminal investigation, and had duly intimated the State government.

The 11-page SIT report had outlined serious irregularities, rule violations and alleged deliberate misconduct that had taken place between 2019 and 2024. It had recommended stringent action against those responsible.

The SIT had recommended that the government take suitable action against the erring members and TTD officials.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/ gusty winds likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	31.2	16.8	Kozhikode	43	34.0	22.9
Ahmedabad	—	34.2	19.5	Kurnool	—	36.2	23.1
Aizawl	—	28.9	10.5	Lucknow	—	28.9	13.4
Allahabad	—	31.4	14.6	Madurai	—	37.4	23.6
Bengaluru	—	32.8	19.2	Mangaluru	—	32.8	24.8
Bhopal	—	31.0	14.4	Mumbai	—	34.5	21.0
Bhubaneswar	—	35.8	20.6	Mysuru	—	34.4	18.6
Chandigarh	—	27.2	11.6	New Delhi	—	30.5	11.8
Chennai	—	34.0	24.3	Patna	—	29.6	18.0
Coimbatore	—	35.0	23.4	Port Blair	—	30.5	25.5
Dehradun	—	26.8	12.7	Puducherry	—	31.7	23.5
Gangtok	0.4	17.0	10.3	Pune	—	35.4	21.1
Goa	—	32.8	25.0	Raipur	—	27.7	20.6
Guwahati	—	30.3	14.9	Ranchi	—	29.6	14.0
Hubballi	—	34.0	21.0	Shillong	—	19.0	8.9
Hyderabad	—	32.1	23.0	Shimla	—	20.8	9.3
Imphal	—	26.9	11.6	Srinagar	—	21.0	1.0
Jaipur	—	29.7	19.2	Thiruvananthapuram	30	33.6	22.8
Kochi	—	31.0	26.2	Tiruchi	—	34.7	22.6
Kohima	—	22.0	9.0	Vijayawada	—	33.2	21.6
Kolkata	—	31.6	19.5	Visakhapatnam	—	31.7	23.1

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	102	93	52	162	222	
Bengaluru	21	11	51	78	102	
Chennai	6	14	54	26	53	
Delhi	56	90	90	247	306	
Hyderabad	—	8	40	160	153	
Kolkata	8	84	48	173	139	
Lucknow	11	26	65	143	169	
Mumbai	13	49	43	158	142	
Pune	—	117	47	173	140	
Visakhapatnam	7	73	20	43	83	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ballabgarh, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 315 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Puducherry recorded a healthy AQI score of 23

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Guruvayur appointments: SC to hear recruitment board's appeal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court posted an appeal filed by the Kerala Devaswom Recruitment Board (KDRB) against a State High Court decision to strike down provisions which empowered it to appoint candidates to various posts in the Guruvayur Devaswom and aided educational institutions on March 10 for final hearing.

A Bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath recorded an assurance given by the KDRB, represented by senior advocate V. Giri, who on the instruction of advocate-on-record G. Prakash, to not make any selections in the interregnum.

Caught in the cross-fire

Advocate Mukund P. Unny, for candidates, said thousands had written the exam and were now "caught in the cross-fire".

The KDRB has sought a stay of the High Court decision while submitting that its functions were limited to affairs of recruitment and did not intervene in the religious duties concerning temples.

The High Court had directed that proceedings relating to the appointment or selection of candidates to posts must be done as per the Guruvayur Devaswom Act, 1978.

The High Court direction had come on an appeal filed by the Guruvayur Devaswom Employees Union Congress and others, challenging the relevant provisions of the KDRB Act.

Special panel to oversee

The court had quashed the notification issued by the KDRB inviting applications for various posts and added that the KDRB should not in future conduct any selection proceedings for appointments to these posts.

In addition, the managing committee of Guruvayur Devaswom was directed to initiate the appointment process afresh, while a special committee would supervise and control the entire process.

The committee headed by retired judge of the Kerala High Court, Justice P.N. Ravindran, would have a one-year tenure.

4 workers killed as slab collapses on them

The Hindu Bureau
KOZHIKODE

Four headload workers were killed when the sunshade of an old godown owned by the Kozhikode City Corporation collapsed on them on Monday. The victims were identified as Jabbar, Ashraf, Basheer, and Vinod. They were taking rest under the 50-metre long sunshade after unloading goods at a shop in Valiyangadi around noon. Though a Fire and Rescue Services squad rushed them to a nearby hospital, they succumbed to injuries on the way.

CITY MUNCIPAL COUNCIL, KOPPAL.

No:CMC/AMRUT 2.0/2025-26 Date : 19-02-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Koppal City under Commissioner CMC koppal state Governor behalf of Transparency public storage act 2000 and KW-4, rule, works Karnataka state government e-procurement portal in **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** PWD Registers Contractor to Tender invite. Tender form Rate and EMD cost Specified in e-procurement portal.
Name of work : Amrut 2.0 Grant **DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT55260.** Estimate Cost (In lakh) **: 241.00. EMD Cost (in Rs) : 303890.00.** Class of Eligibal Contractor **: Class-2 & Above (2) DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT55271.** Estimate Cost (In lakh) **: 243.00. EMD Cost (in Rs) : 335251.00.** Class of Eligibal Contractor **: Class-2 & Above.**
Conditions : (1) Period of tender document download in govt e-procurement on-line apply last date. **05-03-2026 evening 4.30 PM. (2)** Technical bid open date **07-03-2026 Morning 10:30 AM. (3)** Financial bid open date :**09-03-2026 Morning 10:30 AM** or bid open date after published **(4)** Similar Nature of work done Submitted as Per KW-4 Releted Works. **(5)** Tender Conditions and rules office hours technical dept or **(https://www.koppalcity.mrc.gov.in)** download the information in website **(6)** work complition period 6 months (Including Rainig **(7)** Tender rejecteing autority CMC Office **(8)** For More information contact to state govt e-procurement portal.

Sd/-
Muncipal Commisioner
CMC Koppal

DIPR/Koppal/698/DeshpandePublicity/2025-26

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Reg. Office: 30/1, 1st & 2nd Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Millers Tank Bund Area, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru- 560051

No. DGM-3/BSWML/PR/787/2025-26 Date: 23.02.2026

Notification for Inviting Expression of Interest (EOI)

Under the DAY-NULM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission) scheme, as part of Component 2.0, applications are invited from eligible Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for the selection of 5 SHGs under the IEC (Information, Education & Communication) activities related to sanitation, solid waste management, and awareness creation.Interested SHGs registered under DAY-NULM and actively involved in sanitation-related activities should submit their applications online through the BBMP website: **www.bswml.karnataka.gov.in** by **5:00 PM on 02.03.2026.** Applications should be submitted to the following address: #30/1, 3rd Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Millers Tank Bund Area, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560051. Details such as the Terms of Reference (TOR), Template for submission of TOR, and Endorsement Form are available on the BBMP website: **www.bswml.karnataka.gov.in**
The SHGs are expected to: 1) Identity proof, 2) Address proof, 3) Documents proving registration in the eligibility list, 4) Educational qualification & 5) Support the DAY-NULM team in their related activities. All interested SHGs are requested to read the instructions carefully and submit the required documents within the specified deadline.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ.	ವಿವರ	ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಹತೆ
1.	ಸಮುದಾಯ ಸಂಚಾಲಕರು (Community Mobilizer)	(1) ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್.ಎಲ್.ಸಿ. / 10ನೇ ತರಗತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉತ್ತೀರ್ಣರಾಗಿರಬೇಕು. ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿ ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷಾ ಜ್ಞಾನದ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಕೆಲಸ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವವರಿಗೆ ಆದ್ಯತೆ. (2) ಬೃಹತ್ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ Day-NULM ಶಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಸ್ವ-ಸಹಾಯ ಗುಂಪಿನ ಸದಸ್ಯರಾಗಿರಬೇಕು (SHG) (3) ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರು MS Office ಮತ್ತು MS Excel ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಸಾಕ್ಷರತೆಯನ್ನು ಕನ್ನಡ ಅಥವಾ ಆಂಗ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಂದಿರಬೇಕು. (4) ಐ.ಇ.ಸಿ. ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುಭವವಿರುವ ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರಿಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿನ ನಗರ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು ಅಥವಾ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್‌ಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸಂವಹನ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಅನುಭವ ಇರುವವರಿಗೆ ಆದ್ಯತೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು. (5) ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ವಾರ್ಡ್ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಸವಿರುವ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಆದ್ಯತೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು.

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML.

DIPR/CP/5833/SSC/2025-26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No: CEE/Tr(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AEE-1/2025-26/14180-83 & 14184-87
Date:21.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH KPP PORTAL ONLY)

KPTCL invites bids for the following works on **Partial Turnkey basis. (1)** Tender No.KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT 3324 for **Replacement of 2x12.5MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformers by 2x20MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformer at 66/11kV S/s Belur in Belur Taluk, Hassan District. (2)** Tender No. KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3325 for **Replacement of 2x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformers by 2x20MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer at 110/11kV S/s DM Kurke in Arasikere Taluk, Hassan District.** The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website: **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 23.02.2026 at 11:00 Hrs**. Any other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Electy.,)
Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL,
3rd Floor, Prasarna Bhavana, Santhepete,
B.M. Road, Hassan-573 201

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, (Coordination & Planning), 9th Cross, 9th Main Road, Jayanagar 2nd Block, Bangalore-560 011.

No. EE/C&P/E-Proc/TN/05/2025-26 Date: 11.02.2026

PUBLIC TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT
(Karnataka Government e-Procurement through e-Auction only)

The Executive Engineer (Coordination & Planning) Division, invites tenders for Jayanagar New (Sir.M.Visveshvaraiah Building) Commercial Complex (Block-1) vacant floors of building located in Jayanagar 4th Block under this jurisdiction for office use through e-Auction tender subject to the terms and conditions as per the details given below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Area in Sqft	Contract period	EMD in Rs.
1.	Renting of Third Floor for office space at Sri M.Vishweshwaraiah Shopping Complex Building, (New complex) 4th block, Jayanagara.	4897.62	5 Years or 60 Months	Rs. 1,00,000.00
2.	Renting of Six Floor for office space at Sri M.Vishweshwaraiah Shopping Complex Building, (New complex) 4th block, Jayanagara.	4897.62	5 Years or 60 Months	Rs. 1,00,000.00

Tender Schedule: (1) Tender Document may be downloaded through GOK E-Procurement Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in (2)** The public who wish to participate in the tender bid may obtain further details from the above office during office hours on all working days or from the e-Procurement Portal website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in (3)** Last date for submission of tender documents: **02.03.2026** and live auction bidding will be open on the e-Proportal from **11.00 AM to 2:00 PM on 04.03.2026.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
(Coordination & Planning), BSCC

Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited (Encore ARC)
acting in its capacity as the Trustee of EARC-Bank-035-Trust
Encore ARC Corporate Office Address: 5th Floor, Plot No. 137, Sector 44, Gurugram

Public Notice for e-Auction

e-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) & Rule 9 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (Rules).
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to Aditya Birla Capital Ltd. ("ABCL") to secure dues in the loan account since assigned to Encore ARC (Secured Creditor) acting in its capacity as the Trustee of EARC-Bank-035-Trust **("Secured Creditor")**, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Encore ARC, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 30.03.2026 at 11:00 a.m., for recovery of Rs.2,94,28,308/- (Rupees Two Crore Ninety Four Lakhs Twenty Eight Thousand Three Hundred and Eight Only) as on 31-01-2026 together with further interest from 01.02.2026 at contractual rate and other admissible costs and charges due to the Encore ARC (Secured Creditor) from Borrowers viz **M/s.Rentprop4u Mgt Services Private Limited, Mr Nagaraj M, Mrs Asha M and Mr Ravi M.**
The description of the mortgaged immovable properties, and the details of Reserve Price for the Secured Assets, Earnest Money Deposit & Minimum Increment Amount in Bidding Process are as under:

Item Sr No.	Name of Account	Description of Property	Reserve Price (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (In Rs.)	Minimum Increment Amount in Bidding Process (In Rs.)
1.	M/s. Rentprop4u Mgt Services Private Limited, Mr Nagaraj M, Mrs Asha M and Mr Ravi M.	All that piece and parcel of the land and building at Extract of Form B Property register No. 2825/165/116/61/44/5-36-5 assigned to Khaneshumari Nos. 165 & 116, Katha No. 61/44/5-36-5, measuring East to West 60 feet and North to South 60 feet, situated at Kudlu Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, comprising of a building, and bounded on: East by : Property belongs to Mr. Nagaraj & Road; West by : Property belongs to Mr. Sadashivaiah; North by : Property belongs to Mr. Muniayappa & Mr. Nagaraju; South by : Property belongs to Mr. Chowdappa.	2,50,00,000/- (Rupees Two Crore Fifty Lakhs Only)	25,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs Only)	50,000.00 (Rupees Fifty Thousand Only)
2.	M/s.Rentprop4u Mgt Services Private Limited, Mr Nagaraj M, Mrs Asha M and Mr Ravi M.	All that piece and parcel of the land and building at Site No. 108, Katha No.117, measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 30 feet, formed in land bearing Sy No.117, situated at Kudlu Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, comprising of a building, and bounded on: East by : Road; West by : Property belongs to Mr. Vasu; North by : Karadamma Temple; South by : Property belongs to Mr. Ashwath.	79,00,000/- (Rupees Seventy Nine Lakhs Only)	7,90,000/- (Rupees Seven Lakhs Ninety Thousand Only)	50,000.00 (Rupees Fifty Thousand Only)

Date of Inspection of Secured Assets	09/03/2026 between 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Last Date of Submission of online Bid	Before 3.00 PM on 27/03/2026
Date & Time of e-Auction	30/03/2026 at 11.00 AM to 1:00 PM with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes each as per Terms & Conditions mentioned below.
Auction Website	https://bankeauctions.com

In case the e-Auction date is declared public holiday then the date will be automatically extended to the very next working day.
Since Encore ARC is acting in its capacity as Trustee of EARC-Bank-035-Trust only, any reference of its name in this Public Notice should be construed accordingly.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Encore ARC's website i.e. https://www.encorearc.com and https://bankeauctions.com
Interested bidders may contact Authorised officers of Encore ARC Mr B M Nagaraju 8384074164, Mr R Sureshkumar 98840 70098 and Mr. K.Nagendran Mobile No. 91762 91717, for any further information / query.

B M Nagaraju
Authorised Officer
Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited

Date: 23.02.2026
Place: Chennai

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(Government of Karnataka Enterprises)
Office of the Executive Engineer KNNL, GRBCC Div No. 2, Hidkal Dam Office Tel. No. 08333-2200119 / Fax No. 08333-263405 / e-mail: eegrbc2@gmail.com

No:KNNL / GRBCC-2 / DB / TND /2025-26/2406 Dated: 21.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-procurement system only)

In the year 2025-26, tender announcement for 02 No. Dam related works has been issued under this division office. The details are as follows.(Estimate Amount Rs. 28.95 to 70.94 Lakhs) 1) Indent No.2955 & 4001 2) Govt of Karnataka Website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Portal Tender Documents Viewed from Date:21.02.2026. 2)Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders Date:02-03-2026 Time:17.30 Hrs 3) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid/tender:04-03-2026 Time:10.30 Hrs.
Further any information :Note:Here after any change with reference to this Notification will be Notified in https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Portl Only.

Sd/-Executive Engineer,
KNNL GRBCC Div No.2 Hidkal Dam

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1912/KSMCA/2025-26

READ
SPORTSTAR
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE,
VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

AI for all

The AI Impact Summit was a sign of things to come in India

The attendance at the AI Impact Summit, in New Delhi, showed an extreme enthusiasm for Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies by digitally connected Indians. While statistics shared by AI firms have frequently cited India as the biggest user base outside the U.S., the crowds over the week were the biggest indicator of just how keen many Indians are to adopt this technology. At its core, the summit was a continuation of a series of annual multilateral discussions on AI, and 89 countries have signed a declaration laying out a voluntary set of commitments to share knowledge on AI democratisation. The summit's context comes with foreboding challenges for India: namely, deploying and diffusing a technology whose capital and infrastructure reside abroad, and finding a place in the global AI ecosystem that will place Indians well in the economic transformations that this technology's adoption promises. India's data centre capacity is growing healthily, but the AI moment calls for further momentum, a difficult ask when the costs of graphics processing units (GPUs) driving AI push up the cost of domestic deployment so much, not to mention the additional electrical capacity that must be built. A national strategy that relies overwhelmingly on becoming a hub for the deployment of models, with less emphasis on their training and finetuning, could pose risks; after all, with fewer labour costs, the advantage that India has will be smaller than in the ITeS era.

On the international cooperation front, it is disappointing that India has so eagerly enabled the U.S.'s hands-off impulses for AI. This is a technology with enormous scope for economic and social disruption. Countries must use the annual AI forum to collectively build tools and safety standards that can exercise actual leverage over how LLMs diffuse throughout society. Leadership of the Global South entails empowering countries that are individually vulnerable to collateral damage in an era of great power rivalries. AI is increasingly defining that era more and more acutely. Consensus at all costs is not the appropriate approach. As a country of enthusiastic AI adopters, India has the leverage and capacity to articulate an optimistic but prudent way forward for AI governance, and the summit declaration showed no signs of this power. The summit's central pillar remains an important one: for AI to be a net good, its capabilities need to be democratised. As India closes its digital divide, there cannot be an inference gap. If the summit made anything clear, it was that India is as capable of organically contributing to worldwide growth as it has the capacity, should it choose, to be a force to shape its orderly growth.

Stick together

India and Brazil have realised the importance of their groupings

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's India visit last week sent important messages for both India-Brazil ties, and for solidarity in the developing world, as two Global South powers focused on global governance and leadership. After his talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India and Brazil agreed to try and double trade to $30 billion by 2030, and signed agreements on critical minerals, steel mining, and digital cooperation to diversify beyond China-led supply chains. Mr. Lula, along with French President Emmanuel Macron, was among about 20 leaders at India's AI Impact Summit and was later accorded a state visit. The 80-year-old Brazilian President's presence was important, as he faces elections later this year, which may make it difficult for him to attend India's BRICS summit if it coincides with his campaigning for a fourth term. It also came amidst fresh turmoil over U.S.-imposed trade tariffs, after the American Supreme Court struck down U.S. President Donald Trump's rationale for the reciprocal tariffs. India and Brazil were both the highest taxed countries by the U.S. – 50% tariffs each – and both faced further possible tariffs over BRICS ties, Iran trade, and Russian oil imports. India and Brazil are also key members of the BRICS grouping of developing nations, the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA), G-4 with Germany and South Africa on UNSC reform, and co-founders of the biofuel alliance for alternative energy; each of these has faced challenges from Mr. Trump's policies on trade, territorial sovereignty, multilateralism and the UN, and fossil fuels. Amid such uncertainty, Mr. Modi and Mr. Lula reaffirmed their commitment to protecting the multilateral order.

Before leaving India, Mr. Lula, who is set to visit Washington next month, did not mince words while speaking to journalists about the challenges posed by the U.S. government. As a former trade union leader, he said he believed that the only way of tackling geopolitical uncertainty unleashed by the U.S. was for countries to "unionise", rather than cutting deals individually with Washington, which leave smaller nations at a disadvantage. The words are particularly important for both Delhi and Brasilia, as both have negotiated with the Trump administration on tariffs, but have not so far signed trade deals with the U.S. The U.S. court ruling offers an opportunity to reset the terms of the agreements, and it is significant that New Delhi has postponed a meeting of trade negotiators this week to give the U.S. and India time to assess the ruling. India and Brazil, and their developing world partners, should coordinate the next steps and stay engaged with Washington. Mr. Lula's warning is clear: it is easy to break a single stick, but far more difficult to do so if the sticks are bundled tightly together.

The quiet crisis of adolescent mental health in India

Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya

is a practising cardio-metabolic physician, health policy expert and a specialist in parenting and child development

Dr. Deepak Gupta

is a leading child and adolescent psychiatrist

The passing of three adolescent girls in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, earlier this month, is a case that deeply unsettled the public. The intense media attention reflects collective grief – but treating this tragedy as an isolated incident risks ignoring a larger reality. India faces a growing, largely neglected crisis in child and adolescent mental health, rooted in early vulnerability and worsened by an unregulated digital environment.

Mental health challenges are no longer limited to adults or older teens. Clinicians increasingly see anxiety, depression, attention disorders and behavioural issues in much younger children. Yet, many families, schools and even parts of the health-care system still view these as "adult issues". In fact, emotional and behavioural disorders can appear as early as four or five years of age. Early trauma, neglect and chronic stress can disrupt emotional and cognitive development, often resurfacing with greater intensity during adolescence.

These conditions have also grown more complex. Where children showed a single diagnosis, comorbidities are now common – attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) with anxiety, depression with compulsive digital use, learning difficulties with emotional distress–making early recognition crucial.

The extent of the problem

Population-level data mirrors what clinicians observe daily. Findings from the National Mental Health Survey and subsequent studies suggest that between seven per cent to 10% of Indian adolescents have diagnosable mental health conditions, and five per cent to seven per cent of school-aged children have ADHD. Yet early signs – withdrawal, impulsivity, sudden behavioural changes – are often dismissed, leading to academic, social and long-term emotional harm. India faces an acute shortage of trained child and adolescent mental health professionals. With fewer than 10,000 psychiatrists for a population exceeding 1.4 billion–and only a small fraction specialising in child mental health – the gap is stark. Shortages of clinical psychologists, child psychologists and psychiatric social workers further strain an already fragile system. Families are left to navigate fragmented care largely on their own.

Childhood vulnerability has been amplified by a transformed digital landscape. The rise in mental health concerns parallels the spread of smartphones and low-priced Internet data, now used by over 800 million Indians–many of them children. The COVID-19 pandemic further embedded screens into daily life including education, recreation and social interaction.

With schoolwork, communication and entertainment all on the same device, boundaries have blurred. Internet addiction which is marked by loss of control, irritability, sleep disruption and social withdrawal, is now a routine clinical concern.

As early as 2019, the World Health Organization issued guidelines and had cautioned against excessive screen exposure among children and adolescents, highlighting its adverse effects on sleep, attention, emotional regulation and overall wellbeing. These recommendations predated the pandemic. It is important to understand that the excessive screen use does not cause neurodevelopmental conditions such as ADHD or autism spectrum disorders. However, it can significantly exacerbate symptoms, delay diagnosis and displace the human interaction essential for healthy brain development during periods of heightened neuroplasticity. In vulnerable children, this displacement can have lasting consequences.

Against this backdrop, parents and families have to assume a central role. They are not merely caregivers but a child's first mental health buffer – as the earliest observers of emotional change and the most consistent source of psychological safety. Trauma-informed parenting, which recognises how stress, loss and adversity shape behaviour, must extend beyond clinical settings into everyday life. Listening without judgement, noticing changes in sleep, mood or social engagement, and seeking help early can dramatically alter outcomes.

Support groups are proven to further strengthen this protective environment. Parent support groups reduce isolation, normalise help-seeking and enable shared learning. Adolescent peer-support groups provide safe spaces for emotional expression, resilience-building and the development of coping skills. Evidence consistently shows that such collective, community-based approaches are more effective than isolated, clinic-centred interventions.

Schools are a weak link

Schools, however, remain a critical weak link. Academic performance continues to dominate institutional priorities, often at the expense of emotional wellbeing. Examinations, rankings and competition define school culture, while structured attention to emotional regulation, stress management and happiness remains limited. This imbalance is neither benign nor sustainable. Mental wellbeing is foundational to learning, creativity and long-term productivity; without it, academic success is fragile and transient.

A further challenge lies in the gap between evidence and practice. India's research base on child and adolescent mental health, digital behaviour and early intervention has grown steadily. Yet, translation into routine care remains slow. Paediatricians – often the first point of contact for families – must routinely inquire about emotional wellbeing, sleep patterns, screen use and peer relationships, and not just physical growth. Teachers, counsellors, psychologists and all professionals working with children need structured training to identify early signs of mental health problems and Internet-related harms. Stigma continues to delay care, with families often seeking help only during crises.

In today's context, child and adolescent mental health is intricately linked to social media and Internet use. These concerns were explicitly acknowledged in India's Economic Survey 2025-26, released in January 2026, which highlighted rising mental health challenges among young people and proposed a range of preventive strategies. Several Indian States, drawing on precedents in Australia, France and South Korea, are considering regulatory steps to limit adolescent social media use. This is an idea whose time has come, provided it is implemented thoughtfully, alongside education and support rather than punitive controls.

Actions to implement

Policy and programmatic action must now align with reality. India can strengthen existing platforms – the National Mental Health Programme, school health services under Ayushman Bharat – health and wellness centre initiative, and tele-mental health initiatives – by introducing routine school-based screening, training teachers and frontline workers in early identification of child and adolescent mental health issues, and reinforcing referral pathways. Earmarked funding for child mental health initiatives, clear guidelines on digital use in schools, and affordable community-based counselling, especially for low- and middle-income families, are urgently needed.

Implementation, however, faces practical hurdles. Stigma surrounding mental health remains pervasive, and child psychiatry carries an even heavier burden of fear and misunderstanding. Concerns about labelling, judgement and long-term consequences often delay help-seeking until distress escalates into crisis. Normalising conversations around mental health within families, schools and health-care systems is not optional; it is a public health imperative.

The Ghaziabad case must not remain just a headline. Preventing similar tragedies requires coordinated action between schools, paediatricians, mental health professionals, and communities. Even modest, timely interventions can change developmental paths. While telepsychiatry and digital platforms have expanded reach, access remains unequal; extending these services to underserved families, alongside investment in training and interdisciplinary care, must be a priority.

Parents need guidance on early warning signs and healthy digital use. Schools should make mental wellbeing part of daily learning. Paediatricians must screen for emotional and behavioural issues, and community support networks strengthened. Policy must treat mental health as central to child development.

Equally important is a need to shift in what we value as outcomes. Childhood should foster wellbeing, resilience, and connection–not just competitiveness. Neglecting it now will carry far higher social and economic costs later.

Families, schools and policymakers must prioritise youth mental wellbeing

India's energy shift through the green ammonia route

Pawan Mulukutla

is Executive Program Director – Integrated Transport, Clean Air and Hydrogen at WRI India

Anuraag Nallapaneni

is Program Lead – Hydrogen at WRI India

Sneha Malhotra

is Program Associate Director – Energy Innovation and Technology at WRI India

At the inaugural session of the India Energy Week (IEW), in January 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi positioned India's ambitions at the centrestage of the global energy discourse, highlighting investment opportunities worth $500 billion across the sector. As India raises its ambition from energy security to energy independence, the affordability of clean energy such as green hydrogen and its derivatives is critical to the long-term competitiveness of India's energy transition. But from fertilizers to clean energy and marine fuel, there are now green ammonia applications which are wide-ranging. Green ammonia – produced by combining nitrogen with green hydrogen – is currently leading in the adoption of green hydrogen, with its strategic adoption advanced across regions such as the European Union (EU), India and South Korea.

Aggregated procurement mechanisms are starting to lay the foundation for a global green ammonia market. Some noteworthy examples include H2Global's tender of green ammonia under the EU's hydrogen import strategy, South Korea's Clean Hydrogen Portfolio Standard (CHPS) tender for clean ammonia procurement as a bulk fuel, and the recent tender concluded by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) under the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) programme of India's National Green Hydrogen Mission.

Green ammonia auction

Compared to these global procurement practices, India's green ammonia auction under SECI demonstrates broader market participation, attracting 15 bidders and resulting in seven unique successful awardees. Under the SIGHT programme, SECI floated a tender in June 2024 for an aggregated demand of up to 724,000 tonnes of green ammonia annually across 13 fertilizer plants in India. These tenders concluded in August 2025, and offered a 10-year, fixed-price offtake agreements to successful bidders. This clarity in price and offtake provided producers with the market certainty required for investment. The auctions established a significant breakthrough in cost-competitive green ammonia procurement, setting new global benchmarks, almost 40%-50% less than the prices from the H2Global auction

The country's green ammonia auction model has the potential to redefine global standards for clean energy adoption

The tender process faced multiple extensions and revisions, primarily to resolve concerns around risk allocation, payment security, and clarity on offtake and pricing conditions, raised by both project developers and offtakers. These refinements successfully addressed concerns, leading to a balanced win-win framework for all stakeholders.

In this auction, seven bidders secured a total of 13 delivery contracts for green ammonia. Notably, one company won six contracts for 3,70,000 tonnes/year. These contracts include production subsidies of ₹8.82 a kilogramme, ₹7.06 a kg, and ₹5.3 a kg for the first three years and a 10-year fixed price supply agreement to existing fertilizer manufacturers in India.

The discovered prices of green ammonia across these tenders range from ₹49.75 and ₹64.74/kg ($572 and $744 a tonne). In India, the grey ammonia price is as high as $515 a tonne. When factoring in the newly discovered price of green ammonia, supported by longer-term contracts, the cost gap has significantly narrowed.

On delivery and transportation

Notably, a standout feature of SECI's tender is the pre-identification of delivery points, as most fertilizer plants where the green ammonia is to be delivered are located near coastal areas, enabling the transportation of green ammonia through shipping as well. The contracted volumes of green ammonia contribute to approximately 30% of the total ammonia being imported, offering price predictability and greater insulation from global gas market volatility, currency risks and geopolitical pressures. In locations where grey ammonia costs are higher, green ammonia procurement increases its appeal for scale-up.

Propelling the momentum

India's approach is increasingly shaping the clean ammonia landscape worldwide, owing to its combination of low renewable energy costs, large-scale logistics, robust contract design and targeted incentives. As more countries seek reliable clean ammonia imports to decarbonise industry, power and transport, India's successful auction model is well placed to shape emerging global market structures and accelerate adoption at scale.

However, sustaining the momentum created by India's green ammonia auctions will require coordinated and sustained action from policymakers, project developers and financiers. Developers must focus on strong technical and financial due diligence, integrate hybrid renewable systems with storage, and adopt transparent monitoring frameworks to ensure long-term operational viability. Policymakers, in turn, need to provide stable and harmonised regulations on grid access, banking and incentives, while strengthening safety standards and aligning certification frameworks with evolving global norms.

Long-tenor, blended finance facilities, backed by extended offtake agreements and dedicated risk-mitigation instruments, can further enhance project bankability and crowd in private capital. Together, these measures can reinforce investor confidence, accelerate scale-up, and firmly position India not just as a participant but also as a global leader in clean ammonia markets.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The price of membership

India's entry into the Pax Silica alliance marks a shift from exclusion to inclusion in key technology coalitions. The challenge now lies in meeting scrutiny and conditionalities that test its industrial capacity. Heavy reliance on PLI schemes exposes structural gaps. While telecom has advanced, battery manufacturing lags and upstream solar segments remain weak, highlighting the limits of capital subsidies without strong technology partnerships, skilled labour and R and D depth. Though Pax Silica promises trusted supply chains, it also brings export controls, and technology transfer guardrails.

Sowbakyatha S.U.,
Tiruchi

C.L. Ramakrishnan

C.L. Ramakrishnan, IPS, and a former Director General of Police, Tamil Nadu, who passed away on February 22, was a remarkable personality known for his integrity, erudition, and deep knowledge of police procedure and law, honed over his long tenure in the Central Bureau of Investigation. His genuine simplicity encouraged junior officers to approach him freely and learn the intricacies of criminal investigation. He was also an accomplished Sanskrit scholar, whose discourses on scriptures, especially the Narayaneeyam, captivated audiences far and wide. Personally, his demise is a great loss, as his guidance taught me many subtle nuances of the law.

R.K. Raghavan,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Rethinking tribal women's inheritance rights

Shalini Saboo

Junior Fellow, Centre for Contemporary Studies, Prime Ministers Museum and Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi

The question of women's inheritance rights in tribal communities remains unresolved. Customary laws of most tribal communities deny absolute property rights to their women, and the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, which grants daughters inheritance rights in ancestral property, keeps tribal women out of its purview. Until recently, however, the Supreme Court had in some cases granted inheritance rights to tribal women who had 'Hinduised', i.e., adopted Hindu customs and traditions after abandoning their customary practices. This inconsistent approach – excluding tribal women from inheritance rights in some cases due to the acceptance of exclusion clauses under Hindu laws, while granting rights in others because of 'Hinduisation' – created uncertainty for tribal women whenever questions of inheritance arose.

Reaffirming an old principle

This came to an end when, on October 8, 2025, the Court delivered a verdict, upholding the core inheritance provisions of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956. A Bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra stated that the Act cannot be applied to Scheduled Tribes under any circumstances. While this observation was not new, it reaffirmed the law's principle of providing special protection to indigenous communities under the legal system.

The verdict was given in the case of *Nawang v. Bahadur*. The civil appeal challenged the order dated June 23, 2015, passed by the High Court of Himachal Pradesh at Shimla, pertaining to a particular property case. The High Court had said that tribal daughters who had been 'Hinduised' ought to have an opportunity to inherit property under the Hindu Succession Act. The Supreme Court overturned that order stating that only Parliament had the authority to extend the Act to tribal communities. The Court brought to light the fact that the High Court had overstepped its jurisdiction by directing legislative changes. It affirmed that tribal inheritance falls under the rubric of the customary practices of communities unless the Central government officially intervenes.

The Supreme Court's decision came just months after it recognised, in *Ram Charan v. Sukhram*, that excluding daughters from ancestral property violates their fundamental right to equality. It invites not only deep analysis, but also partially answers certain questions. Is 'Hinduising' a tribe the only way to secure inheritance rights for tribal women? Should Scheduled Tribes be granted inheritance rights solely on the basis of religion, disregarding their unique social and cultural characteristics? Can they not be given equal inheritance rights by expanding any other statute? Or, in the absence of consistent statutory and customary law guaranteeing tribal women inheritance rights, should tribal women continue to face discrimination under the pretext of upholding tradition?

Defining Hindu

On defining the term 'Hindu', the Supreme Court, in *Sastri Yagnapurushadji v. Muldas Brudardas Vaishya* (1966), said that "unlike other religions in the world, the Hindu religion does not claim any one prophet, it does not worship any one God, it does not subscribe to any one dogma, it does not believe in any one philosophic concept, it does not follow any one set of religious rites or performances, in fact, it does not appear to satisfy the narrow traditional features of any religion or creed. It may broadly be described as a way of life and nothing more". A person can be a Hindu either by birth or by conversion. Conversion means a bonafide intention to follow a particular faith with an unequivocal conduct expressing sufficient evidence of conversion. A converted person continues to be a member of the tribe unless his ancestors had converted long time ago and have stopped following tribal customs including the customary laws of inheritance and marriage, as are expected of the members of that tribe.

This judgment of the Supreme Court raises a question. Was not the earlier practice of 'Hinduisation' of tribal people a negation of the constitutional guarantee to protect the unique identity of tribal people? The ruling affirms the constitutional validity of Section 2(2) of the Hindu Succession Act, which excludes Scheduled Tribes from the Act. This provision had previously been challenged on the grounds that it created invidious discrimination between women belonging to Scheduled Tribes and those outside the category.

Earlier, the courts used to broaden the scope of Section 2(1) of the Hindu Succession Act to include Scheduled Tribes by holding that since they are not expressly excluded under the section, they would be included within the definition of 'Hindu' under Section 2(1) of the Act. This is not only contrary to Section 2(2), which states that notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Section 2(1), no provisions of the Act shall apply to notified Scheduled Tribes, but was also used to force tribal women to choose between their tribal identity and becoming followers of Hinduism.

An opportunity

Now that the Supreme Court has stated that the Act cannot be extended to tribal people irrespective of their religious allegiance, it would be wise to introduce a special enactment governing inheritance rights among the indigenous population. Codifying customary laws of succession in other States with significant tribal populations on the lines of Mizoram could provide a solution to ensure gender parity while preserving tribal identity.

Now that the Supreme Court has ruled that the Hindu Succession Act does not apply to tribal communities, a separate law could be introduced to govern inheritance among indigenous populations

Congress tightens grip, but tests lie ahead

The party cannot afford to be complacent even after winning the municipal polls

STATE OF PLAY

R. Ravikanth Reddy
ravikanth.ramasayam@thehindu.co.in

The results of the 2026 Telangana municipal elections mark another milestone in the Congress's steady political consolidation in Telangana. Before this, the party won the 2023 Assembly elections; secured eight seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, which was as many as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP); and won a majority of sarpanch positions in 2025. Together, these victories have strengthened the Congress's organisational confidence and reinforced the public perception that the party is the new pole of stability in Telangana.

The municipal results have also served as an internal stabiliser for the leadership. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy appears to have firmly consolidated his position. Challengers and sceptics within the party seem to have resigned themselves to the reality that the Chief Minister is politically unshakeable, at least for the foreseeable future.

It is not uncommon, however, for a ruling party to perform well in local body elections. The advantages of incumbency, visibility of welfare schemes, administrative access, a favourable bureaucracy, and the perceived ability of ruling party MLAs to get work done often weigh heavily on voter psychology. This phenomenon was evident in 2020 as well, when the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) swept over 95% of municipal bodies and captured the Zilla Parishad chairperson's post in all the districts.

However, a comparison between 2020 and 2026 also highlights why the present Congress victory carries deeper political meaning. Unlike the BRS's sweep of 2020, the Congress secured just over 70% of municipal wards this time. Yet, this outcome is significant precisely because Congress faced two strong Opposition parties. The BRS still commanded a sizeable presence with 37 MLAs (including 10 defectors), while the BJP entered the contest with eight MLAs and eight MPs.

This stands in contrast to 2020, when the Congress was organisationally battered, reduced to just six MLAs, with 12 legislators defecting to the ruling BRS, and a mass migration of grassroots cadre. The BJP then had only one MLA, though it had four MPs. The Congress's journey from that nadir to its current dominance shows the scale of its revival.

The Congress has emerged as the single largest party this time. Securing 39.80% of the vote share, it finished 11.05% points ahead of the BRS. This gap is striking when viewed against the backdrop of the 2023 Assembly elections, where the difference between the two parties was just 2%. The Congress had already widened this lead in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, polling 40.1% while the BRS secured just 16.7%, with much of its vote share shifting to the BJP.

The municipal polls reveal an interesting reversal. While the BRS recovered a significant portion of its lost vote share, largely at the expense of the BJP, the Congress not only retained its base but also expanded it further. The BJP, which had polled nearly 35% in the Lok Sabha elections, slipped to a surprising 15.68%, which is a huge setback, especially in urban areas where it is considered strong.

The scale of the Congress victory is evident in seat distribution too. Of the 2,996 wards across 123 urban local bodies, it secured 1,347, winning 99 out of the 123 municipalities and corporations that went to polls. The party emerged victorious in 68 of the 81 Assembly segments where municipal elections were held, despite major urban centres such as Hyderabad, Warangal, and Khammam being excluded from this round.

Mr. Reddy himself set the campaign narrative in the final days, while adopting a decentralised approach that gave ministers and MLAs autonomy but with accountability. He also deftly diverted attention from sensitive urban governance issues towards broader political themes.

Yet, the Congress cannot afford complacency. Nearly 38 municipalities delivered hung verdicts, underlining local dissatisfaction and factionalism. The BJP's victory in Karimnagar Corporation and the BRS's continued presence in several municipalities signal that urban Telangana remains politically competitive. Moreover, incumbency fatigue, governance delivery in urban areas, and internal party management will become bigger challenges as the Assembly elections approach. Transforming the present momentum into a second Assembly victory will depend on whether the Congress is able to address its weaknesses.

Why upper caste support matters for the BJP

Sustained majority-level support suggests that upper caste voters view the BJP as their primary political vehicle at the national level

DATA POINT

Sanjay Kumar
Vibha Attri

In recent weeks, there have been debates and protests in universities across India over the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026, designed to promote fairness in higher education. The Supreme Court put the regulations on hold after concerns were raised that the key provisions were vague and prone to misuse.

While the protests focused on educational policy, they also revealed political tensions, particularly among upper caste voters. This is a constituency that is historically significant to the BJP. Although the initial anger was directed at the UGC rules, it soon extended to criticism of the BJP. This was especially true of upper castes who may have been most affected if the regulations were implemented. The episode highlights the continuing electoral importance of upper castes for the party.

Survey evidence from the National Election Study (NES) conducted by Lokniti-CSDS shows that upper caste Hindu voters have steadily consolidated behind the BJP and its allies over the past three decades **(Table 1)**. While upper castes form a modest share of the electorate, their cohesion and concentration in key States enhance their influence.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, about 60% of upper caste voters backed the National Democratic Alliance, with 53% voting directly for the BJP. Around 20% backed the Congress-led alliance and 14% voted for the Congress.

During the coalition era (1996-2004), upper caste voters leaned towards the BJP, though support had not yet reached majority levels for the party. The 2009 election marked a brief weakening. From 2014 onwards, consolidation became clear: upper caste support for the BJP crossed 50% and has remained above that level. This sustained backing suggests that upper caste voters increasingly view the BJP as their main political choice at the national level.

State-level data (2014-2024) show that this consolidation is geographically widespread. In Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, support for the BJP remained above 60% across three Lok Sabha elections. Delhi and Himachal Pradesh show similar stability **(Table 2)**. In Telangana, where the BJP was historically weak, upper caste support rose sharply from 12% in 2014 to 53% in 2024. In West Bengal, support surged in 2019 before moderating in 2024, yet remained much higher than a decade earlier. In Assam and Odisha, upper caste voters have consistently favoured the BJPdespite shifts in overall vote share. Together, this evidence indicates that upper caste support for the BJP is neither regionally confined nor episodic. It forms a durable pillar of the party's coalition.

Assembly elections provide a stricter test of alignment, as they are shaped more by regional leadership and local issues. If upper caste support were driven only by national mobilisation, it would likely be more volatile in these contests. The evidence instead shows continuity. In Uttar Pradesh, support rose from 71% in 2017 to 78% in 2022 **(Table 3)**. In Madhya Pradesh, it increased sharply between 2018 and 2023. Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh remain competitive, yet upper caste support for the BJP is strong. Even in States dominated by regional parties, the BJP's upper caste base has remained significant.

Across elections, upper caste voters remain a stable and strategically important constituency for the BJP. This explain why policy debates seen as affecting upper caste interests can carry political implications that extend beyond the issue at hand.

Voting patterns

The data were sourced from the National Election Study (NES), 1996-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS and the various State Assembly election studies conducted in different States by Lokniti-CSDS

All the figures are in percent

TABLE 1: Upper caste Hindu votes for the BJP and Congress: Lok Sabha elections 1996-2024

Year of election	BJP	BJP allies	NDA	Congress	Congress allies	UPA/ INDIA
1996	35	4	39	25	-	25
1998	36	14	50	25	3	28
1999	42	20	62	20	-	20
2004	36	17	53	22	7	29
2009	28	7	35	25	9	34
2014	47	9	56	13	3	16
2019	52	7	59	12	5	17
2024	53	7	60	14	6	20

TABLE 2: State-wise upper caste Hindu votes for the BJP and Congress: Lok Sabha elections 2014-2024

State	BJP 2014	BJP 2019	BJP 2024	Congress 2014	Congress 2019	Congress 2024
Bihar	77	76	53	1	2	2
UP	74	80	77	7	5	7
MP	64	75	72	24	24	20
Rajasthan	60	70	65	20	22	23
Chhattisgarh	46	72	74	17	16	17
Haryana	40	63	54	15	27	35
Delhi	62	75	71	10	12	14
Himachal	60	68	70	35	29	30
Jharkhand	77	63	58	7	5	14
Uttarakhand	64	80	67	30	16	22
Assam	65	55	44	23	13	20
West Bengal	21	57	43	4	3	4
Odisha	26	42	49	9	10	5
Karnataka	64	71	66	35	16	22
Telangana	12	38	53	15	25	29

Notes: *Bihar: Include BJP allies (14% in LS 2014), (47% in LS 2019), (29% in LS 2024), Haryana: INLD-28% (2014 LS), Delhi: AAP (21% in LS 2014), (12% in LS 2019), (12% in LS 2024), Jharkhand: JVM (10% in LS 2014), in 2019 3% of AJSU included in BJP, West Bengal: In LS 2014 (AITC-40%, LF-29%), in LS 2019 (AITC-31%, LF-9%), in LS 2024 (AITC-43%, LF-7%)*

TABLE 3: Upper caste Hindu vote for the BJP and Congress and major regional parties. Last two State Assembly elections in different States:

State	Year of election	BJP/ NDA	Congress/ INDIA bloc/ MGB
Bihar	2020	54	16
	2025	67	9
UP	2017	71	2
	2022	78	1
MP	2018	57	32
	2023	74	21
Rajasthan	2018	50	35
	2023	61	32
Chhattisgarh	2018	50	43
	2023	54	39
Haryana	2014	37	18
	2024	42	39
Delhi	2020	54	3
	2025	62	4
Himachal	2017	51	38
	2022	49	38
Jharkhand	2019	42	25
	2024	66	20
Uttarakhand	2017	56	27
	2022	60	26
Assam	2016	71	20
	2021	68	21
West Bengal	2016	13	13
	2021	45	2
Karnataka	2018	42	32
	2023	60	22
Telangana	2018	10	33
	2023	20	39

Notes: *Haryana 2014: INLD (26), Delhi 2020: AAP (41), Delhi 2025: AAP (30), West Bengal 2016: AITC (43), West Bengal 2021: AITC (40), West Bengal 2021: AITC (40), Karnataka 2018: JD(S) (18), Karnataka 2023: JD(S) (14), Telangana 2018: TRS/BRS (44), Telangana 2023: TRS/BRS (36)*

Sanjay Kumar is a Professor and political analyst. Vibha Attri is a researcher working with Lokniti-CSDS. Views expressed by the authors are personal, do not reflect views of their institution.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 24, 1976

Photo-setting for books: Plant in Bangalore

Bangalore, Feb. 25: The Macmillan group of companies, the internationally known publishers, have selected Bangalore for locating their modern type-setting plant because of its climate, which is suited to men and woman as also the computers in the plant, as Mr. Harold Macmillan put it.

The former British Prime Minister and President of the Macmillan group of companies inaugurated the plant here this afternoon.

The Rs. 40-lakh-plant has been set up for photo-setting pages of texts composed for printing. The film negatives will be composed with the aid of computerised monokeyboards and film-setters. However the printing of the books would be done in the United Kingdom and Australia with the use of the films exported from Bangalore. The investment in the project will be doubled next year.

After the inauguration of the most modern type-setting project, Mr. Macmillan said his company had begun a "new phase of association between the U.K. and India which would open up a new field of exports for the latter." He envisaged that the value of exports of films from the plant would go up to Rs. one crore a year by 1978. Production would begin in a month or two.

He recalled that the company opened its branch in India over 100 years ago. To-day its operations in India were being carried on by an Indian company called the Macmillan Company of India Limited.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 24, 1926

Emigrants from Fiji

A representative of "The Hindu" interviewed the emigrants last night and was able to gather the following particulars concerning the present condition of the Indian labourers in Fiji, the wages obtaining there and the facilities afforded to them for settlement and comfortable living. Their general appearance, to begin with, betokened extreme poverty, great suffering and hardship.

Enquired about the general conditions in Fiji they all represented, without one single exception, that Fiji was no doubt a good and comparatively healthy place to settle down but they would never advise their brethren in India to leave their homes.

From Page One

Centre unveils policy to tackle terrorism threats

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had announced on November 7, 2024, that a National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy was being drafted to fight terrorism and its ecosystem.

Following the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror incident, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted meetings with anti-terror units of all States and apprised them of the measures aimed at preventing and pre-empting such attacks.

The policy further states that for propaganda, communication, funding and guiding terror attacks, these terror groups use social media platforms as well as 'instant messaging applications' and technological advancements such as encryption, dark web, crypto wallets etc, enabling them to operate anonymously.

"Disrupting/Intercepting terrorist efforts to access and use CBRNED (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive, Digital) materials remains a challenge for Counter Terrorism (CT) agencies. The threat of state and non-state actors misusing drones and robotics for lethal purposes remains another area of concern," it flags.

As a way forward, the policy suggests that to make appropriate cases against the perpetrators of acts of terrorism, there is a need to associate legal experts at every stage of investigation.

"Terrorist groups based outside (from abroad) nowadays use the infrastructure, logistics and terrain knowledge of local outfits for launching attacks. National actions, coupled with international and regional cooperation, are key elements in addressing the transnational terrorism challenge," it emphasises.

The MHA said Indian intelligence and law enforcement agencies have been continuously working to prevent the recruitment of Indian youth by extremist groups.

Underscoring the role of community and religious leaders, the policy states that moderate preachers and NGOs are engaged to spread awareness about the adverse consequences and impacts of radicalisation and extremist violence.

The Ministry said there is a move to establish a uniform anti-terrorism structure across States, as standardisation of processes and procedures would ensure similar and synergistic responses to terror attack.

It said that the policy aims to criminalise all terrorist acts and deny access to terrorists, their financiers and supporters access to funds, weapons and safe havens.

Air ambulance with 7 aboard crashes

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in a statement said, "On February 23, 2026, Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd Beechcraft C90 aircraft VT-AJV operating medical evacuation (Air Ambulance) flight on Ranchi-Delhi sector crashed in the Kasaria panchayat of Chatra district in Jharkhand." There were seven persons on board, including a 41-year-old patient and two crew members.

"The aircraft was airborne from Ranchi at 7.11 p.m. After establishing contact with Kolkata at 7.34 p.m., the aircraft lost communication and RADAR contact with Kolkata at approximately 100 NM South-East of Varanasi," it added.

Chatra Deputy Commissioner G. Keerthishree said, "The aircraft went missing around 7.30 p.m. It crashed at the Bariatu panchayat in Simaria." The DC said that she could not confirm the casualties right now, as the place of occurrence was deep in the forest.

"A team has been sent. We can confirm when the team reaches there," she added.

Meanwhile, as per the DGCA website, Delhi-based non-scheduled operator Redbird has six planes in the fleet, including the one which crashed on Monday.

CEO of Devkamal Hospital in Ranchi, Anant Sinha, said that the air ambulance was arranged by one of the patients.

"The patient Sanjay Kumar (41), a resident of Chandwa in Latehar district, was brought to the hospital with 65% burn injuries on February 16. He was being treated in the hospital," he said. Mr. Sinha added that the family members decided to take him to Delhi for better treatment.

Violence sweeps Mexico after cartel leader killed

Travel warnings from the U.K., Canada and the U.S. have been issued in the fallout.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum urged citizens to remain calm.

Oseguera, 59, was considered the last of the drug lords who acted in the flashy, brutal mould of the now-imprisoned Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman and Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada. With his son Ruben 'El Menchito' Oseguera Gonzalez, 35, convicted by a federal jury in Washington in September, experts have warned the "the absence of a direct succession" could lead to a "power vacuum."

Mexico said in addition to its own military intelligence, the operation to seize Oseguera was carried out with "complementary information" from U.S. authorities. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said Washington "provided intelligence support".

Six suspected cartel gunmen besides Oseguera were also killed and three soldiers were wounded.

Canadian PM arriving on February 27 for trade talks

Carney to meet Modi on March 2 and discuss new tie-ups in energy, AI, defence; officials hope the visit will reset the ties ruptured by allegations over killing of Khalistani separatist leader Nijjar

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

PM Narendra Modi met Canadian PM Mark Carney in June 2025 on the sidelines of the G7 Leaders' Summit in Canada. REUTERS

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney will travel to Mumbai and Delhi this week as part of a three-nation tour of India, Australia and Japan aimed at enhancing and diversifying Canada's trade relations, his office announced on Monday.

Mr. Carney is expected to land first in Mumbai on February 27, and meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi on March 2, and discuss "new partnerships in trade, energy, technology and artificial intelligence (AI), talent and culture, and defence", a statement released in Ottawa said. The visit to three of Canada's "strongest Indo-Pacific partners", who are all part of the Quad with the U.S., is also a significant push for Canada's own Indo-Pacific policy.

"In a more uncertain world, Canada is focused on what we can control. We are diversifying our trade and attracting massive new investment to create new opportunities for our workers and businesses," Mr. Carney was quoted as saying about the 10-day visit to all three countries. "We are forging new partnerships abroad to create greater certainty, security and prosperity at home," he added.

Ahead of the visit, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held talks with his Canadian counterpart, Anita Anand, on the sidelines of the Munich Security Forum last week.

During the visit, Mr. Carney is expected to focus on India-Canada trade negotiations for comprehensive economic partnership agreement, investment opportunities, cooperation in fossil fuel and nuclear energy, as well as critical minerals technology. He will also seek to put behind years of mistrust and sharp rhetoric between the Modi government and his predecessor, Justin Trudeau, whose last visit to India for the G-20 summit in 2023 proved to be particularly acrimonious over the Khalistan issue.

Last year, Mr. Modi's visit to Canada for the G-7 outreach and meeting with Mr. Carney began the process of repairing ties, which the return visit this week is expected to complete, officials said.

Thaw in ties

In what was seen as a particular breakthrough, National Security Ajit Doval visited Canada in early February, after years of India-Canada tensions over the killing of Khalistani separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June 2023, that the Canadian police accused the Indian government of orchestrating through agents there. The trial of four men who have been arrested is expected to begin later this year, but in a sign that the Canadian government wants to be sensitive to India's concerns over the case, the Canadian Attorney-General has, according to local reports, requested permission to suppress certain evidence disclosures as they could be "injurious to international relations and national security".

In a statement about the meeting between Mr. Doval and his counterpart Nathalie Drouin, the Ministry of External Affairs did not refer directly to the case but said that they "agreed to a shared workplan to guide bilateral cooperation on national security and law enforcement issues and to enable practical collaboration on respective priorities".

Mr. Carney will meet Mr. Modi for official talks on Monday and fly that evening to Australia, before travelling to Tokyo to meet newly re-elected PM Sanae Takaichi.

Mr. Carney's visit comes a month after his trip to Beijing, where Canada and China restored trade ties, visas, and reduced restrictions on Chinese electric vehicles.

IDFC First Bank fraud finds an echo in Haryana House

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Nayab Singh Saini

A day after IDFC First Bank Ltd. revealed a ₹590-crore fraud linked to the Haryana government's accounts, the Opposition Congress on Monday flagged the issue during the Budget Session in the Assembly, even as Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said that a detailed investigation had been ordered in the case.

The alertness of State government departments had shed light on the issue, following which the government had immediately de-empanelled IDFC First Bank, Mr. Saini said.

"The statements provided by the bank did not match the records maintained by the departments concerned. The case has been handed over to the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and directions have also been issued to constitute a High-Level Committee to conduct a detailed probe," Mr. Saini told the House.

'Money safe'

IDFC First Bank had written to the Securities and Exchange Board of India acknowledging irregularities committed by certain bank employees, Mr. Saini said.

He added that the bank has also initiated action against the employees concerned.

"... even before the government had taken cognisance of the matter, and on February 18 de-panelled the bank, [the government] directed that the entire amount, along with interest, be transferred to a nationalised bank. The money is completely safe. Every single rupee will be recovered," he said.

"The investigation will determine whether the irregularity was committed by a bank employee or whether it involved any other individual," Mr. Saini added.

Earlier, the Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly, Congress's Bhupinder Singh Hooda, raised the issue pertaining to the IDFC First Bank. "It is a massive scam, carried out by manipulating the accounts of 18 government departments," Mr. Hooda said.

RELATED REPORT ON
» BUSINESS PAGE

SC asks people affected by demolition drives to approach district election officer for SIR

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The scene during a demolition at Akbar Nagar by the Lucknow Development Authority in February 2024. SANDEEP SAXENA

The Supreme Court on Monday said persons whose homes have been demolished by local authorities can approach the district election officer regarding their inclusion on the electoral roll during the special intensive revision (SIR).

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant was hearing a petition filed by Sana Parveen on the plight of residents of Akbar Nagar in Lucknow of Uttar Pradesh, whose buildings, both residential and commercial, were razed after eviction notices in September 2023.

Akbar Nagar is located on the banks of the Kukrail nullah in Lucknow. The National Green Tribunal had found the settlement "illegal". The eviction was part of the Lucknow district administration drive to "beautify the area".

The petitioner argued that the residents were excluded from the electoral roll in the Uttar Pradesh SIR process owing to lack of an "identifiable abode" after the demolition.

Ms. Parveen, through her counsel, argued that many of the residents were part of the Special SIR conducted in 2002-2003 and a summary revision of the electoral roll held in 2025. The petitioner said the Election Commission (EC) must distribute enumeration forms to the residents for submission.

The Bench initially asked the petitioner to approach the Allahabad High Court, saying the plea did not exactly raise an "all India social issue". The issue was local and could be dealt with by the High Court concerned.

Subsequently, the Bench observed that the petition raised "seriously disputed questions and facts" though the petitioner counsel tried to clarify that their representations to the EC met with no success. The top court ordered the District Election Officer, Lucknow to examine the issue and gave the petitioners liberty to approach the High Court in case the election authority's intervention proved to be ineffective.

Considering airfare fluctuation issue: Centre

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Monday submitted in the Supreme Court that the Ministry of Civil Aviation is actively considering the issues raised in a public interest petition seeking regulatory guidelines to control the sharp fluctuations in airfare and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines.

The Bench allowed the Centre four weeks to complete deliberations and inform the court about the outcome. The next hearing is on March 23.

Directions in hate crime ruling may be unmanageable: CJI

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Monday described as "unmanageable" the "general directions" issued by the Supreme Court in a 2018 judgment to the Centre and States to prevent and prosecute cow vigilantism and mobocracy.

Rather, the Chief Justice observed in favour of an individualistic approach, taking up each crime on its singular facts and merits, and acting on any abuse of law with immediate effect.

He said the top court only lays down general principles of law for the authorities to comply with and the people to raise in their protection in case of any violation of their rights. In case of any breach of rights, the public has a remedy in law through the courts concerned, he indicated.

The court refused to entertain contempt petitions that the State governments and authorities had not been acting in compliance with the 2018 *Tehseen Poonawalla* judgment.

"If somebody's rights are infringed or some action is taken in excess of the protection of law. Their rights must be protected. Immediate action must be taken," Chief Justice Kant observed.

The Bench led by then Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra had directed preventive, remedial and punitive measures to deal with lynching and mob violence while ordering the Centre and the States to implement the measures and file compliance reports.

However, when the case came up in February 2025, the apex court said that it could not "micro-manage" criminal prosecutions of mob lynchings and violence in "different areas or different States" across the country from Delhi.

House panel questions timing of PM's Israel visit amid rising tensions

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Shashi Tharoor

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi set to visit Israel amid escalating tensions and a U.S. military build-up across the West Asian region, members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs on Monday raised concerns over the timing of the trip.

Mr. Modi is expected to arrive in Israel on February 25. This will be Mr. Modi's first visit to Israel in nine years and comes after the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, and Israel's bombardment of Gaza for two years, in which over 70,000 people were killed.

During his two-day visit to Jerusalem, Mr. Modi will address the Knesset (Parliament), attend an innovation event on technology cooperation, and go with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the Yad Vashem holocaust memorial museum.

The Standing Committee, chaired by senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, met to discuss the Ministry of External Affairs's (MEA) budgetary allocations.

During the over three-hour meeting, at least one member questioned the rationale behind the Prime Minister's visit at a time when India had issued an advisory urging citizens to leave Iran amid fears of a possible U.S. strike. The member noted that Israel, too, could be drawn into the unfolding conflict.

Responding to the query, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said that all prime ministerial visits were planned keeping security considerations in mind. He did not clarify whether the trip would be cancelled if tensions escalate further.

Several members also raised concerns over the absence of any allocation for the Chabahar Port in this year's Budget. Mr. Misri reiterated the Ministry's earlier response in the Lok Sabha that India had already fulfilled its commitment of contributing $120 million towards procuring port equipment and that no additional funding was due.

Some MPs, however, accused the government of compromising India's strategic autonomy and allowing the U.S. to influence its foreign relations.

Mr. Tharoor described the meeting as "comprehensive", saying it covered a wide range of issues.

'Inadequate allocation'

The members also criticised what they termed the government's neglect of the External Affairs Ministry. A previous recommendation of the panel had called for at least a 20% increase in the Ministry's allocation, but this year's Budget shows a rise of only 7.8%.

They noted that India had no diplomatic missions in 41 countries, and in many nations, a single Indian Foreign Service officer manages the entire mission with minimal staff. The Ministry's allocation remains roughly 0.4% of the total Union Budget.

Concerns were also raised about inadequate support for the Indian diaspora, particularly after the merger of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs with the External Affairs Ministry in 2016.

Parliamentary groups to seek legislative ties worldwide

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a major step to deepen India's parliamentary engagement across the world, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has constituted Parliamentary Friendship Groups, aimed at strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation and legislative dialogue, with more than 60 countries.

A wide spectrum of political leaders are part of the groups.

The first phase involves engagements with countries such as Sri Lanka, Germany, New Zealand, Switzerland, South Africa, Bhutan, Saudi Arabia, Israel, the Maldives, the U.S., Russia, members of the European Parliament, South Korea, Nepal, the U.K., France, Japan, Italy, Australia, Greece, Singapore, Brazil, Vietnam, Mexico, Iran, and the UAE. These groups are expected to facilitate regular dialogue, exchange of legislative practices, and cooperation on trade, technology, culture, and shared global challenges.

The initiative seeks to build on the Centre's post-Operation Sindoor outreach, which saw multi-party delegations representing India abroad on issues of national interest.

Waiting for opportunity to serve people of Bengal: PM

Modi says entire nation is worried about the State as it sinks into 'darkness of anarchy'; he urges people to take an oath to build a 'Viksit West Bengal' in 2026; reaches out to Matua community

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

> The irreparable damage done to West Bengal over the past six decades... is indescribable. On one hand, due to a lack of employment opportunities, the youth are forced to migrate to other States; on the other hand, due to a lack of security, the mothers and sisters of my West Bengal are scared and terrified today
> **NARENDRA MODI**
> Prime Minister

85 lakh toilets were built, 1 crore families were helped via Ujjwala Yojana, Prime Minister says

Ahead of the Assembly election, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote a letter to the people of West Bengal saying that the entire nation was worried about the State as it sank into the "darkness of anarchy". He urged them to take an oath to build a "Viksit West Bengal (Developed West Bengal)" in 2026.

Urging them to join this grand mission of development, Mr. Modi said he was eagerly waiting for an opportunity to serve them.

"An opportunity where, in the words of Kabiguru, 'Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high – *Chitta Jetha Bhoy Shunya, Uccha Jetha Shiir*,' there will be freedom from corruption and misrule," the Prime Minister said.

BJP initiative

The West Bengal BJP has started an initiative of *Griha Sampak Abhiyan* (An initiative to connect with households) in the State since the beginning of February 2026. The campaign is going on door-to-door with the common people. According to BJP sources, the open letter written by the Prime Minister will be handed over to the voters of the State as the BJP leaders reach out to the people.

Alleging that the "holy land [West Bengal] is tarnished by illegal infiltration and violence against women", Mr. Modi said, "Today, fake voters are ruling in golden Bengal".

The Prime Minister also reached out to representatives of the Matua community, and assured them citizenship through the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Good governance

"Our refugee brothers and sisters, victims of religious violence, will get citizenship through the CAA, and good governance free from illegal infiltration will be established in my West Bengal," the Prime Minister said.

Targeting the Trinamool Congress on several counts, Mr. Modi said that in the post-Independence era, West Bengal had been the guiding light of the nation's economy and the pioneer of industrialisation but, today, seeing this ailing and dilapidated state of West Bengal pained his heart. "The irreparable damage done to West Bengal over the past six decades due to misrule and appeasement politics is indescribable. On one hand, due to a lack of employment opportunities, the youth are forced to migrate to other States; on the other hand, due to a lack of security, the mothers and sisters of my West Bengal are scared and terrified today," the letter stated.

Union govt. initiatives

The Prime Minister highlighted various development projects of the Union government, and said that "despite extreme non-cooperation and hostility from the State government, today five crore people of West Bengal have been brought under the umbrella of banking services through the Central Jan-Dhan Yojana".

The Prime Minister said his government had constructed 85 lakh toilets in the State, and reached out to one crore families through the Ujjwala Yojana and over 52 lakh farmer brothers through direct financial assistance under the Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme.

250 judicial officers begin work on resolving pending SIR cases in West Bengal

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Tense wait: People stand in a queue for an SIR hearing at Krishnanagar in Nadia, West Bengal. FILE PHOTO

Following a Supreme Court order, nearly 250 judicial officers started work on Monday on the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal. Their leaves have been cancelled, and the urgent cases they have been hearing in courts have been shifted to other Benches.

Each of them has received a login ID for the Election Commission (EC) portal.

The judicial officers will directly give their verdict on the pending disputed SIR cases and offer their final decisions. According to sources, the number of disputed SIR cases may be nearly 45 lakh, but a final number was not confirmed by any official.

In a notice, the Calcutta High Court directed the judicial officers, including those on pre-approved leave, to report back to their courts by February 23, cancelling all leaves other than those for medical emergencies. The leaves shall remain cancelled till March 9, according to the notice.

On Sunday, district court judges held meetings with the District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police to chalk out a plan to address the disputed SIR cases.

The final electoral rolls are scheduled to be published on February 28. However, it remains unclear if all the pending SIR-related tasks will be over by then.

Three days ago, the Supreme Court agreed with the EC's suggestion that a list of voters whose names have been cleared should be allowed to be published on the scheduled date in February. The rest could be included on a supplementary roll.

The last date of the hearing was February 14. According to West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Agarwal, around 4.98 lakh people did not appear for their hearings till February 14, and 1.63 lakh voters have been flagged as "ineligible" due to errors.

Already nearly 58 lakh names were deleted when the draft voter list was published. They were categorised as deceased, permanently shifted, or untraceable.

Central forces deployed

In a related development, multiple companies of the Central forces have already reached West Bengal on Monday after the EC ordered their deployment.

Central armed police forces officials will conduct a meeting with the State Election Commission officials and State police forces on Monday to hash out details of their upcoming work during the elections.

President unveils bust of Rajaji, hails move to shed 'colonial mindset'

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

In remembrance: The President unveils C. Rajagopalachari's bust at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday. PTI

President Droupadi Murmu unveiled the bust of C. Rajagopalachari at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday, hailing it as a step towards "shedding the vestiges of colonial mindset".

The bust of Rajaji, the only Indian Governor-General of Independent India, has been installed at the Grand Open Staircase near Ashok Mandap and replaces that of Edwin Lutyens, the British architect who designed New Delhi.

"This initiative is part of a series of steps being taken towards shedding the vestiges of the colonial mindset and embracing, with pride, the richness of India's culture, heritage, timeless traditions and honouring those who served Bharat Mata with their extraordinary contributions," said a statement from the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Ms. Murmu visited the venue of Rajaji Utsav that will be open to the public from February 24 to March 1. Speaking on the occasion, she said that when Rajaji arrived at the Government House (now known as Rashtrapati Bhavan), he placed portraits of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Mahatma Gandhi in his room.

"Rajaji sent a clear message that while India was formally still a dominion, Swaraj had been fully established in the hearts of Indians. Thus, Rajaji set an inspiring example of mental decolonisation. His ideals are reflected in the national campaign adopted by the people of India to take pride in India's heritage... Indian consciousness and connection with all Indians, especially the weaker sections, are reflected in Rajaji's thoughts and actions," she said.

The President said that while India moved towards "Viksit Bharat", icons such as Rajaji would inspire people with their ideas and ideals. She called for promoting the spirit of enterprise to fulfil his dreams.

Rahul, 'Mohammad' Deepak hit it out, Cong. leader to join 'Hulk' gym

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi with gym owner 'Mohammad' Deepak in New Delhi on Monday. @INCINDIA X

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday met Deepak Kumar from Uttarakhand who confronted right-wing activists when they allegedly harassed a 71-year-old Muslim garment seller over the name of his shop.

Mr. Kumar had identified himself as 'Mohammad' Deepak to the men who had pressured the garment seller to change the name of his shop on Republic Day.

The meeting took place at 10 Janpath, the residence of Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi in the national capital. Mr. Kumar was accompanied by his friend Vijay Rawat, who supported him during the confrontation.

'An example of unity'

The Congress posted pictures of the meeting on its official X handle and hailed Mr. Kumar for "setting an example of unity, brotherhood, and courage – one that will inspire every young person in the country to muster the courage to fight against injustice and hatred."

"*Do Bhai, Mohabbat Ke Sipahi* (two brothers, soldiers of love)," read the caption of a picture showing Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Kumar hugging each other.

Speaking to the media after meeting Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Kumar said that the Congress leader had extended solidarity with him and consoled his family which feared for his life after his confrontation with the right-wing 'goons'.

"Rahul ji said that he will come to Kotdwar and take membership in my gym... He assured me that I am not alone in this fight. He also gave me courage saying that whatever I have done was right," Mr. Kumar said.

Mr. Kumar, who runs the Hulk gym in Kotdwar town of Uttarakhand, said that the incident on Republic Day, registration of a first information report over it, and subsequent protests by Vishva Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal members have taken a toll on his business. Mr. Kumar also said that he is now getting support from across the country.

Earlier, Mr. Gandhi had expressed support to Mr. Kumar. In a social media post, he had said that the episode had reflected the values of equality and unity, both central to India's ethos. He had said that the spirit of harmony and courage should be reflected among the country's youth.

'Unite Humanity March'

Two days before meeting the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Kumar and Mr. Rawat had released a video on Instagram sharing their plan to organise a nationwide march which they named "*Insaniyat Jodo Yatra* (Unite Humanity March)".

"I am getting immense love from you people... Let me know what do you think about our plan," Mr. Kumar said in the video.

160 senior academics condemn YC protest

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Terming the "shirts-off" protest by the Youth Congress workers at the AI Impact Summit "profoundly regrettable and ill-conceived", 160 senior academics have said that the incident is a reflection of its "inability to distinguish between legitimate democratic dissent and the imperative of safeguarding national prestige on a global stage".

Among the signatories of the joint statement are JNU Vice-Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, IIT-Roorkee Director Kamal Kishore Pant, IIT-Dharwad Director Venkappayya R Desai, and IIT-Jodhpur Director Avinash Kumar Agarwal.

"The protest associated with Rahul Gandhi conveyed an unfortunate impression at a time when global investors... were assessing India's credibility as a long-term partner in AI and advanced technologies," said the statement.

Mukul Roy, Trinamool Congress leader and former Railway Minister, dies at 71

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Mukul Roy

Trinamool Congress leader Mukul Roy passed away in the early hours of Monday morning. He was 71.

He was admitted to a private hospital in Kolkata with several ailments. Mukul Roy's son Subhranshu Roy said that his father suffered a cardiac arrest and passed away at 1.30 a.m.

One of the founding members of the Trinamool Congress, Mukul Roy was considered a Chanakya of West Bengal politics. Before the rise of Abhishek Banerjee in the Trinamool Congress, Mr. Roy was widely considered the number two in the party.

A trusted aide of Trinamool Congress chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Mr. Roy was key to the party's organisation and served as a link between the party and the government. Hailing from Kanchrapara in North 24 Parganas, Mr. Roy started his political career with the Congress and decided to set up Trinamool Congress with Ms. Banerjee in 1998.

It was under Mr. Roy's influence that several leaders from Congress joined the Trinamool Congress. Mr. Roy had also served as Railway Minister from March to September 2012.

West Bengal Chief Minister Ms. Banerjee described Mr. Roy as her "long-time political colleague and a comrade-in-arms in many political struggles", and said that the "news of his departure has left me heartbroken". Ms. Banerjee also added that Mr. Roy "devoted his life to the party from the very inception of the Trinamool Congress". The Trinamool chief in her message on social media added that "later he took a different path, only to return again".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled his death on X, saying, "Pained by the passing of former Union Minister Shri Mukul Roy *ji*. He will be remembered for his political experience and efforts to serve society... "

U.S. deal, Epstein links are shameful, not peaceful protests, Rahul tells Modi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leader hits back at the Prime Minister for accusing his party of resorting to 'shameful' politics

Hitting back at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for accusing the Congress of resorting to "shameful" politics, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Monday said that the India-U.S. trade agreement in which the country was sold out "was shameful, not the non-violent peaceful protests" by Indian Youth Congress (YC) workers.

"Narendra Modi *ji*, listen carefully – non-violence and peaceful protest are the foundation of democracy. This is the path shown by Gandhiji and Bhagat Singh: why are you so afraid of it? And you talk about shame? Let me tell you what is shameful. The trade deal you signed with America, in which you sold out the country, that is shameful," Mr. Gandhi said in a video on his X handle.

The trade deal handed over "our country's data, destroyed the farmers and ruined the textile industry," Mr. Gandhi said. The Congress leader, addressing the workers of the BJP-RSS, said: "[Late Jeffrey] Epstein, who was a paedophile, [and] your name, your Minister's name, and your friend's name appear in his files and mails. This is a matter of shame.".

"The whole country knows that the case going on against [Gautam] Adani in America has taken away your sleep because it is a case against the BJP and your financial architecture. That is shameful," Mr. Gandhi said.

His video was released even as Delhi Police arrested more YC workers for their "shirtless protests" during the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi. Condemning the arrests and detention of its youth wing leaders, the Congress demanded that their "harassment" must stop. Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal strongly condemned the detention of YC president Uday Bhanu Chib.

Party veteran Margaret Alva, who had taken a divergent view on Sunday, saying that "at international events, there has to be dignity, discipline, a sense of responsibility", clarified on Monday that her comments are personal.

INBRIEF

Indian nationals advised to leave Iran amid rising tension

India on Monday advised all its nationals residing in Iran to leave the country by all available means of transport in view of the evolving security situation in the country. The Indian Embassy in Iran issued a fresh advisory to Indian nationals amid renewed protests in Tehran, and increasing fears of U.S. military strikes on the Gulf nation. According to official estimates, in January, a little over 10,000 Indians, including students, were living in Iran. "In view of the evolving situation in Iran, Indian nationals who are currently in Iran (students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists) are advised to leave Iran by available means of transport, including commercial flights," the Embassy said. PTI

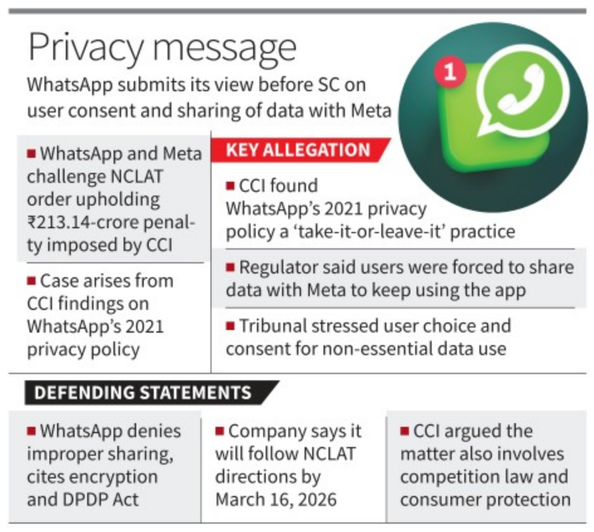
RSS-backed trade union to launch nationwide protest

Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), the RSS-backed trade union, has decided to launch protests in every district on February 25 against the labour policies of the Union and State governments. The BMS demanded the Centre to urgently convene the tripartite body Indian Labour Conference to discuss workers' issues, including the implementation of the four Labour Codes. Talking to reporters in Delhi on Monday, BMS leaders said the Centre has promised that it will make amendments to the Code on Industrial Relations and the Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions in the second leg of the Budget Session beginning on March 9.

WhatsApp tells SC it does not share data with Meta

Will fully comply with National Company Law Appellate Tribunal directions on user consent for sharing data with parent company, it says as both challenge imposition of penalty of ₹213.14 crore

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



The instant messaging platform WhatsApp maintained in the Supreme Court on Monday that it was not "quite right" to say the online entity was sharing data with other Meta platforms.

Appearing before a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for WhatsApp and its parent company, Meta, said its technology was very clear and put a premium on privacy. "There is no question of violating the law," Mr. Sibal submitted.

He said the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, comprehensively addressed the privacy concerns raised in the Supreme Court.

The court was hearing petitions filed by Meta and WhatsApp against a National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) decision to uphold a ₹213.14-crore penalty imposed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

The CCI had found WhatsApp's "take-it-or-leave-it" approach in its 2021 privacy policy an abuse of its market dominance. It found the prior consent sought from users to share their data with Meta "manufactured". It had concluded that users were forced to share data for continued access to WhatsApp messaging services.

In an appeal last year, the NCLAT concluded that the "core principle is to remove exploitation by restoring user choice".

"The users can be given choice if users retain the right to decide what data is collected from them, for which purposes, and for how long. We had also stated in our findings that any non-essential collection or cross-use (like advertising etc.) can occur only with the concerned user's express and revocable consent," the NCLAT had observed.

On Monday, WhatsApp said it would fully comply with the NCLAT directions relating to user consent for sharing data with Meta under its controversial 2021 privacy policy by March 16, 2026. The tribunal had, however, found the CCI's five-year ban on sharing data for advertisement purposes "redundant", considering that the user had already been given a choice to opt in or out.

WhatsApp has filed a comprehensive affidavit explaining its technology of end-to-end encryption, following scathing oral remarks from the Bench in the previous hearing on February 3.

The Bench had cautioned that it would not permit the platform and Meta to breach the right to privacy of millions of their "silent consumers" in India through the sharing and commercial exploitation of personal data. It had even compared sharing of private data to a "decent way of committing theft". Though WhatsApp and Meta had protested that users could "opt out" of the data-sharing provision, the court had persisted in its criticism.

Senior advocate Madhavi Goradia Divan, for CCI, said there was also a competition law concern attached to the case.

"Data-sharing has many facets. One may be privacy and data protection. But there is another aspect, protecting market and consumer, which stands on a totally different footing," Ms. Divan submitted.

Bihar bans meat, fish sales near schools and religious places

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Vijay Kumar Sinha

The sale of meat and fish near religious places, educational institutions or crowded locations has been banned in Bihar to stop "violent tendencies" in children, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha has said while referring to a letter sent to municipal commissioners on meat shops operating in the open in urban areas.

"This is a new initiative of the new government. We held a meeting and we took seriously the issues raised... From a health perspective, for social interaction, and to prevent violent tendencies among children, we will ban the sale of meat and fish near educational and religious institutions, and in crowded open spaces," he said on Sunday.

Mr. Sinha, also the Urban Development and Housing Department Minister, was referring to a letter sent by the department's Principal Secretary, Vinay Kumar.

The Minister, however, clarified that the State government had no objection to food preferences of people, but said that strict measures had been taken to ensure that "social interaction and the spirit of purity are not violated". He said that "no one's sentiments should be hurt, and the environment must not be polluted".

Violation of provisions

Mr. Kumar had written to all municipal commissioners stating that illegal meat and fish shops were operating under various municipal bodies in violation of the provisions of Section 345 of the Bihar Municipal Act, 2007. However, in the letter, he did not mention about "violent tendencies" in children caused by meat shops.

"Such shops are either operating without licences or the conditions of the licences have not been ensured. Furthermore, meat is being sold in the open and in unsanitary conditions, and dead animals are being displayed," the letter said.

'Self-reliance key to India's ambition of becoming maritime superpower'

India has to create a maritime ecosystem to take leadership in the sector, says Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways; India will be among top five ship-building nations by 2047, he says

INTERVIEW

Sarbananda Sonowal

Shankari Nivethitha. B
THOOTHUKUDI

RAJESH. N

India cannot keep depending on foreign shipping lines for trade and has to create a maritime ecosystem to take leadership in the sector, says Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways. The Minister spoke about India's push towards green shipping fuels, shipbuilding expansion, and progress of the Sagarmala projects. Edited excerpts:

How does the Centre plan to scale green hydrogen and e-methanol hubs to ensure India leads as the primary bunker destination for global green shipping corridors by 2030?

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Hydrogen Mission, it was to promote green transport to achieve a blue economy. As follow-up action, we are developing infrastructure, so that in the near future, hydrogen, ammonia, and all our renewable energy can be promoted. Our target is to combat climate change.

Given the nation's goal to reach the top five countries in the ship-building sector, what are the specific execution milestones up ahead?

India cannot depend on foreign ships all the time. We want to grow on our own, that is why, in the principle of "Atmanirbhar Bharat", we want to create the ecosystem within India, so we can take leadership in this sector. For this, the Prime Minister has indicated two paths: Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.

As part of this, by 2030, we will be one of the top 10 ship-building nations in the world, and by 2047, we will be among the top five.

The Sagarmala programme has been witnessing a reduction in funds. Will that affect any ongoing projects in Tamil Nadu?

No, we are committed to whatever projects we have already accepted, we have already approved and committed. The project's work will definitely be done within the timeline.

Pray for peace to return in Manipur, says *Boong* director after BAFTA win

Press Trust of India
LONDON

Winning team: Director Lakshmipriya Devi with producers Alan McAlex, left, Farhan Akhtar, and Ritesh Sidhwani in London. AP

Filmmaker Lakshmipriya Devi, whose debut feature *Boong* won a BAFTA award at a glittering ceremony in London on Sunday, used the moment on stage to pray for peace in her home State of Manipur.

"The walk up till here felt like the last few steps to reach the summit of a mountain we never knew we were climbing in the first place. I just want to use this opportunity to say that we pray for peace to return in Manipur," Ms. Devi said in her acceptance speech.

Boong, a Manipuri film starring Gugun Kipgen and Bala Hijam, won the award in the Best Children's and Family Film category.

"We pray that all the internally displaced children, including the child actors in the film, regain their joy, their innocence, and their dreams once again. We pray that no conflict is ever formidable enough to destroy the one superpower that all of us have as human beings, that is forgiveness," she added.

In a backstage interaction with presspersons, she said the movie was inspired by the folk tales of her grandmother.

"I come from a very troubled State. Those folk tales always cushioned me. There would be gunshots in the distance but I felt safe with her. I wanted *Boong* to be an urban version of her folk tales with the same kind of warmth that made you feel safe. It's also a closure for myself from those memories of having grown up in a place like that," she said.

Producer Farhan Akhtar said backing the film set in a region of India from which we rarely get to watch films "just felt right".

'Moment of joy'

Congratulatory messages poured in from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Manipur Chief Minister Y. Khemchand Singh, and many in the industry.

"Congratulations to all those associated with this film. This is indeed and moment of immense joy, especially for Manipur. It also highlights the immense creative talent in our country," Mr. Modi said in a post on X.

Mr. Singh said the win was a moment of immense pride not only for Manipur but for the entire nation.

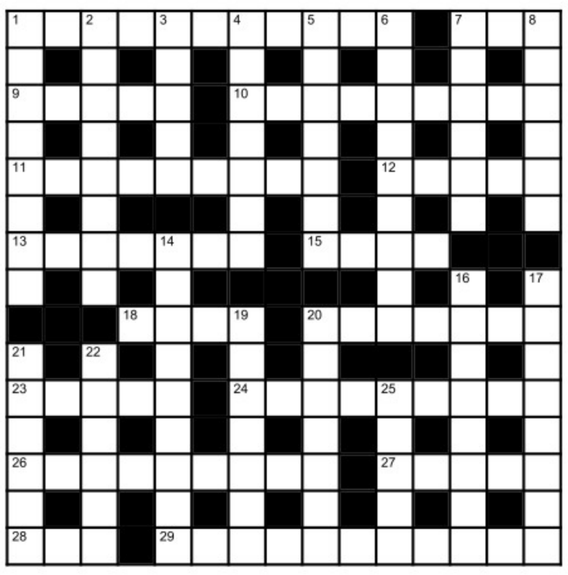
LIST OF WINNERS
» WORLD PAGE

TH CROSSWORD + 14725

(set by Arden)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Fantastic idea, note India gets more coverage - it's a reminder (4-7)
7 Stole a launch, almost (3)
9 Old jail they say is best (5)
10 Regularly impair by blocking new beneficiary (9)
11 Motherland's hell-fire (9)
12 Like to check however, for fungus (5)
13 Brief pull out (7)
15 Keep here evenly - you'll need it for fencing (4)
18 Boring review of a poet (4)
20 Playing team - regret about it being not professional (7)
23 Groom very softly bites lip (5)
24 Respite on assignment (9)
26 "Drink from birth" - recollected a cheat (9)
27 Forget talk of rejecting some coffee (5)
28 Wool supplier - see how one ends up (3)
29 They look for another aspect with Harry (6,5)

Down

1 Bluebeard - born and raised in the city (8)
2 Killed uprising- China will destroy (8)
3 Holding formal talks in the island nation (5)
4 Red planet swallows eleven tons (7)
5 Infuriate a smoker (7)
6 Perhaps same hype about millions suffering from breathlessness (9)
7 Extra police for regulation by local authorities (6)
8 Cause trustee to reject the odd ones - very clever (6)
14 After a harvest, grain storage came up in the outskirts of Athens (9)
16 Go-between randomly to admire (8)
17 Greenhouse or cross over energy? (8)
19 Bitter about a cap - part of habit (7)
20 Annual call by clearing banks - crazy to lose interest (7)
21 Father in pain, is brave (6)
22 Delusion over border, time to support (6)
25 Maybe helps to carry (5)

SUDOKU

4	3	5			1			6
		1	7	4		2		
	9					1		
1				6			7	
			3		5			
	6			1				4
		9					1	
		2		7	8	4		
8			1			5	2	7

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

No.SS6801 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	5	7	1	3	8	2	4	9
8	3	2	9	4	7	5	6	1
4	1	9	5	2	6	7	8	3
1	4	3	2	5	9	6	7	8
2	8	6	7	1	3	9	5	4
7	9	5	8	6	4	3	1	2
9	2	1	4	7	5	8	3	6
5	6	4	3	8	2	1	9	7
3	7	8	6	9	1	4	2	5

FAITH

Abhisheka Kandan

There is a Murugan temple in Sri Lanka, which is connected with a Tamil princess, said Desa Mangayarkkarasi in a discourse. Due to a curse, this princess had a digestive disorder, and the face of a horse. She visited Tiruchendur hoping for a cure. In Tiruchendur, Murugan faces the sea. The place which He faces is called Vadana Aramba Thurai. The princess bathed here, and a voice was heard. The voice instructed her to go to Keerimalai in Sri Lanka. The voice said there was a swayambhu Murugan in Keerimalai, and asked her to worship this Murugan for relief from her curse. Since the means of acquiring a human face was suggested here, this place in Tiruchendur is called Vadana Aramba Thurai. Vadana means face; aramba means beginning. Thurai means bathing ghat.

The princess went to Keerimalai, where sage Nakula, also known as Keeri muni, was doing penance. He had been cursed with the face of a mongoose, and this curse had vanished when he had worshipped Lord Siva in this place. Sage Nakula guided the princess to the swayambhu Murugan of the sthala, and asked her to do an abhisheka to the idol. When she did so, her horse face vanished and in its place was the face of a very beautiful young woman. She was also cured of her digestive problem. To show his gratitude, her father took granite boulders from Tamil Nadu to Sri Lanka, and built a stone structural temple for Murugan. This place in Lanka is called Mavittapuram, and Murugan here is known as Maavai Kandan. He is also called Abhisheka Kandan. Although abhishekas for deities are common in temples, this place in Lanka is unique because the deity here has the prefix abhisheka before His name.

INBRIEF

SECL eyeing 7.5 MT of coking coal in Chhattisgarh, M.P.

South Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (SECL) would be tapping into coking coal and has already assessed potential for 7.5 million tonnes (MT) across varied regions in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, B.N. Jha, Area General Manager of Baikunthpur (Chhattisgarh) said on Monday. "We have already affirmed the potential for coking coal in the Kewai block (Madhya Pradesh)," he stated, adding, "Further, in the Baikunthpur [Chhattisgarh] area itself, we have affirmed the potential in Labji Pusla mine and Katkona mine."

Morepen Labs shares surge on bagging ₹825 crore deal

Morepen Laboratories shares surged more than 15% on Monday after the drugmaker said it had secured a multi-year contract development and manufacturing organisation (CDMO) mandate valued around ₹825 crore ($91 million) from a leading global pharma major. Supplies, under the mandate, are expected to commence within next 4-5 months, with execution scheduled through Q1 of the following financial year. The shares closed ₹45.37 each on the BSE.

India amends tax treaty with France, cuts dividend tax

India has revised its three-decade-old tax treaty with France, which will help major French firms save millions of dollars in dividend levies, while it also broadens New Delhi's powers to tax certain transactions, the finance ministry said. French firms holding at least 10% in an Indian entity will now pay a 5% tax on dividends, down from 10% earlier. For minority French shareholdings of under 10% in Indian companies, however, dividend tax will rise from 10% to 15%. REUTERS

'SEBI will probe egregious behaviour in employees'

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) will "get to the bottom of it" if any evidence of egregious behaviour is found in employees, Chairperson Tuhin Kanta Pandey said here on Monday.

It is important to take action if evidence of "egregious behaviour" arises, to avoid dissuading those who work with integrity, Mr. Pandey said, responding to questions on the suspension of General Manager Achal Singh over alleged 'integrity issues'.

"It's important that if there's any such case, we'll get to the bottom of it. But we do have [the] whole system in place to see that due opportunity is given, natural justice is given. Nevertheless, [in] the initial stage, the evidence was egregious enough for us to act," Mr. Pandey said at a media briefing.

On the ease of doing business front, Mr. Pandey, during his speech at an event, said that a comprehensive review of the SEBI (Portfolio Manager) regulations was underway and that the regulator was targeting to release a consultation paper proposing the changes by June.

He further said that SEBI was looking into representations from stock brokers regarding the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) new norm mandating a 100% collateral on credit to stock brokers among others.

'IDFC First staff plotted with outsiders in ₹590 cr. fraud'

Isolated case involved one branch and a Haryana government entity, recovery process initiated says CEO: bank well-capitalised to absorb shock, but magnitude of the issue is 'disturbing'

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

IDFC First Bank employees had perpetuated a ₹590 crore bank fraud through a 'traditional method' by colluding with external parties using forged physical cheque transactions, the private sector bank's MD and CEO V. Vaidyanathan said on Monday, a day after the bank reported the matter to the stock exchanges.

However, he said this was a "specific, isolated case involving one branch in Chandigarh and one client group, a Haryana Government entity, and not system-wide". He said no senior management staff of the bank was involved in the fraud and that the recovery process had been initiated. Four bank staff had been suspended.

"It's a case of employee fraud and external parties are involved. The bank has all the systems in place, but in this case it's not an electronic transfer and it's not a digital fraud. It's an older, traditional kind of fraud in connivance with employees. It is a case of collusion," Mr. Vaidyanathan told analysts over an investor conference call.

He said the bank had initiated necessary steps including police complaint to deal with the matter, first time in its 10-year history. It has also appointed KPMG as independent forensic auditor to detect the modus operandi.

The report is expected in four to five weeks, he said. Assuring investors and customers that a proper investigation would be conducted, Mr. Vaidyanathan said the bank was well capitalised to "bear the shock". "The bank is well capitalised and profitability is in positive territory. As far as the bank is concerned, it is now financially very strong but the magnitude of the issue has disturbed us. We will take provisions for this during this quarter. Despite this hit, we will still be profitable," he emphasised.

The bank has been making a quarterly profit of about ₹500 crore. He said the discrepancy of ₹590 crore comprised ₹490 crore that was identified after reconciliation and ₹100 crore of 'self identified' one through internal checks, he said, declining to disclose the timeline of the fraud. The MD said the bank would recover ₹35 crore from Employee Dishonesty Insurance. The fraud came to light when the Haryana government department concerned reached out to the bank asking it to close its accounts and transfer funds to another bank.

In the process, differences were observed between the balance in the accounts and the balance mentioned by the Haryana government entities holding the accounts.

It came to light that the entities had not issued such forged cheques which were cleared by the bank officials to outsider third party accounts in other banks. As news spread, the bank's stock fell 20%, but closed with a loss of 16.18% at ₹70.04 on the BSE.

The RBI is also watching the development, Governor Sanjay Malhotra said. Meanwhile, the Haryana government de-empanelled IDFC First Bank and AU Small Finance Bank after the fraud came to light.

In the red

IDFC First Bank stock tanked 16% a day after the ₹590 cr. fraud involving the bank's staff came to light

- Not digital fraud, but 'traditional kind' in connivance with employees, says MD
- Discrepancy comprises ₹490 cr. identified after reconciliation, ₹100 cr. self-identified via internal checks
- Lender to make provisions during this quarter, 'will still be profitable'

Bharti to invest $2.2 bn to expand digital lending

Reuters

Bharti Airtel on Monday said it will invest ₹200 billion ($2.2billion) in its financial arm over the next few years, as the telco steps up its push into digital lending.

The capital will be infused into its subsidiary, Airtel Money, which received a non-banking financial company (NBFC) licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on February 13.

Bharti's expansion comes as competition intensifies in India's non-bank lending sector, where conglomerates such as Jio Financial Services and established players like Bajaj Finance are scaling up retail credit operations.

The move strengthens Airtel's financial services business as it diversifies beyond telecom into areas such as data centres, cloud and enterprise services.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	MONDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	83,295	0.58
US Dollar	90.89	0.05
Gold	1,62,800	2.06
Brent oil	71.88	—

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2191.00	30.20
Adani Ports	1555.80	44.30
Apollo Hosp	7693.00	77.50
Asian Paints	2429.70	1.60
Axis Bank	1386.70	18.40
Bajaj Auto	9905.50	98.50
Bajaj Finserv	2051.60	-6.90
Bajaj Finance	1031.00	0.80
Bharat Elec	439.75	-1.40
Bharti Airtel	1997.30	19.90
Cipla	1326.50	-14.60
Coal India	426.00	2.45
Dr Reddys Lab	1307.40	27.00
Eicher Motors	8038.50	102.00
Eternal Ltd.	268.00	-1.45
Grasim Ind	2873.40	40.60
HCL Tech	1426.20	-10.30
HDFC Bank	923.60	11.75
HDFC Life	742.45	13.80
Hindalco	916.20	-19.50
Hind Unilever	2345.40	30.90
ICICI Bank	1399.40	4.90
IntGlobeAvi	4862.20	7.60
Infosys	1327.50	-25.70
ITC	325.40	-1.60
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	257.80	-0.80
JSW Steel	1240.50	4.70
Kotak Bank	430.70	9.35
Kwality Walls	26.95	-0.78
L&T	4418.10	37.50
M&M	3447.10	34.30
Maruti Suzuki	15072.00	95.00
Max Healthcare	1083.60	-4.30
NestleIndia	1315.10	21.30
NTPC	375.45	2.50
ONGC	275.65	-3.00
PowerGrid Corp	303.35	4.40
Reliance Ind	1428.00	8.60
SBI Life	2109.60	29.60
State Bank	1227.80	11.70
Shriram Finance Ltd.	1064.70	5.40
Sun Pharma	1732.30	7.90
TataConsumerProduct	1171.80	15.60
Tata Steel	208.14	-0.22
TCS	2676.30	-9.90
Tech Mahindra	1440.90	-16.00
Titan	4272.70	36.30
Tata Motors PV	379.95	1.95
Trent Ltd.	4054.90	-36.10
UltraTech Cement	12976.00	210.00
Wipro	205.89	-3.97

RODTEP rates cut

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade has amended the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products Scheme so that the rate applicable for all products shall be limited to 50% of existing rates and, where applicable, 50% of the notified value caps, with immediate effect.

What happens to India's Russian oil imports, $500-bn U.S. import goal?

NEWS ANALYSIS

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Pressure tactics: The value of India's Russian oil imports fell to a 38-month low in December 2025. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

The Indian trade delegation's last-minute postponement of trip to Washington to finalise an Interim Agreement with the U.S., and the U.S. Supreme Court's order on tariffs both have implications for India's imports from Russia as well as the U.S.

The Indian delegation was to be in the U.S. on February 23-25 to finalise the Interim Agreement, which Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said could be implemented between mid-March and early April. However, sources in the Commerce Ministry on February 22 said that the meeting will be rescheduled "at a mutually convenient date".

"The two sides are of the view that the proposed visit of the Indian chief negotiator and the team be scheduled after each side has had the time to evaluate the latest developments and its implications," the official said.

Mr. Goyal had earlier said India would be able to remove or lower tariffs for American imports only after a deal is signed. The U.S., on the other hand, could so far modify tariffs through executive orders.

No Russian oil threats

Trade and legal experts, said U.S. SC order meant President Trump no longer had any law enabling him to levy tariffs on India if it continues buying Russian oil in large quantities.

Without the tariff threat, India can once again reduce its purchase of the relatively expensive American oil and sour Venezuelan oil.

"With reciprocal tariffs gone, the U.S. now does not have any law under which it can penalise India for buying Russian oil," Ajay Srivastava, founder of the Global Trade Research Initiative and former Director General of Foreign Trade said. "Even if we were to continue our oil imports from the U.S., which have nearly doubled in the last few months, we should refrain from buying oil from Venezuela."

It is important to note Mr. Trump had, on February 6 itself, removed the tariffs linked to India's import of Russian oil. As per Ramesh K. Vaidyanathan, managing partner at law firm BTG Advaya, tariffs could theoretically return, but they would need the backing of U.S. Congress.

Multiple mechanisms

"There are multiple legal mechanisms under which he can do this, but I think what is coming to the fore is that he cannot do these through executive orders and will have to do it under legislative backing for the purpose for which they are designed." In other words, if Mr. Trump can convince the U.S. Congress that tariffs linked to Russian oil imports are necessary, then they could return.

An analysis by *The Hindu* found the value of India's crude oil imports from Russia fell to a 38-month low in December 2025 with Russia's share falling to less than a quarter from 34% a month ago. However, oil imports from the U.S. rose almost 31% over December 2024.

The analysis showed India imported oil from the U.S. at an average price of $506.7 per tonne in December 2025 or almost 8% higher than the average price of Russian oil imported that month.

Uncertainty over deal

"India should follow a wait-and-watch approach and should see how other countries that have signed deals with the U.S. are reacting," said Pankaj Chadha, chairman of exporter body EEPC India.

Mr. Srivastava says the decision to postpone the Indian team's visit to Washington could simply be an "administrative delay".

"There is a possibility that this delay in the Indian team's visit to the U.S. could have been at the request of the U.S. since their officials would be under fire trying to figure out the way forward."

Impact on imports

A delayed Interim Agreement will also push back the date from which India will have to reduce tariffs for imports from the U.S. This can have a dual effect.

On the one hand, local manufacturers can breathe a bit easier since they will not have to compete with duty-free U.S. imports.

On the other several items India imports will continue to face import tariffs, thereby making them more expensive than they would have been had the deal gone through.

Mr. Goyal had previously told *The Hindu* there were several items such as oil, LPG, LNG, aircraft and parts, parts for data centres and quantum computing that India needs but does not manufacture, and so would need to import.

India's imports of electronic parts grew 117% year-on-year to about $2.1 billion in April-December 2025. Similarly, the import of telecom instruments rose 25% and organic chemicals by almost 34%.

A joint statement said India intends to import $500 billion worth of energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, precious metals, technology products, and coking coal from the U.S. over the next 5 years.

The European Union (EU) also said the U.S. must provide more clarity before EU Parliament can ratify the U.S.-EU deal.

Meanwhile, Japanese officials said they won't immediately be revisiting the deal adding, the crux of Japan's deal with U.S. was on lowering auto-related tariffs, which stay unaffected by the U.S. SC decision.

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED
(A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking & an ISO 27001-2022 Certified Company)
VIDYUTH SOUDHA, VIJAYAWADA-520004.

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

The APTRANSCO invites bids online for **Spec No.PMM31-e-17/2026.** **Nature of Work:** Procurement for Supply of various C&R Panels with BCUs required for BESS I&II, Augmentation of PTRs, RMI 2024-25 & O&M 2025-26 Works Date & Time of availability of Tenders: **23.02.2026 at 05:00 PM.** Web: **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in**

RO. No : GMCC/APTRANSCO/55/26 — Sd/- Chief Engineer/Transmission

READ FRONTLINE
LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

RAJASTHAN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(S.K.N. AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY, JOBNER)
DURGAPURA, JAIPUR

NOTICE INVITING BIDS (NIB No:- SKN2526A0437) Date: 17.02.2026
Unique Bid Number (UBN): SKN2526WLOB00472
Sealed E-Bids are invited on behalf of **Rajasthan Agricultural Research Institute, Durgapura, Jaipur (Rajasthan)** for the procurement of E-Tender for **Construction of Plant Tissue Culture Lab and Protected Structures with Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Laboratory Equipment's on Turnkey Basis upto 09.03.2026, 02:00 PM.**

S. No.	Name of Article	Specifications	Qty	Estimated Price (Rupees)	Price of Bidding Document (Rupees)	RISL Fee (Rs.)	Amount of Bid Security (Rupees)
1	E-Tender for Construction of Plant Tissue Culture Lab and Protected Structures with Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Laboratory Equipment's on Turnkey Basis			1500.00 Lakh (15 Cr.)	10000/-	2500/-	Rs. 30,00,000/-

Details may be seen in the Bidding Document at our office or on the website of the State Public Procurement Portal http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in or our website www.sknau.ac.in and may be downloaded from there or obtained from our office on payment of its Banker Cheque/ demand draft.
Raj.Samwad/C/25/21007 — Director

Karnataka Soaps & Detergents Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Sandal City: P.B. No. 5531, Bengaluru-Pune Highway, Bengaluru - 560 055.
Ph: 080-22164879, 22164886, Website: www.mysoresandal.org e-mail: **ksdl.dgmmtls@gmail.com**
An ISO-9001:2015 & 14001:2015 Company
Date: 23.02.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tenders are invited by **KS&DL** in two cover system through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/**) with respect to supply of following Goods/Services/Works.

Sl. No.	Tender Number	Tender Name	Tender Quantity	Published date	Last Date of Submission
1	KSDL/2025-26/IND0979	Procurement of Mysore Carbolic Soap 150g Cartons	1765833 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
2	KSDL/2025-26/IND0980	Procurement of Mysore Carbolic Soap-150g Corrugated Boxes	16331 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
3	KSDL/2025-26/IND0981	Procurement of Herbal Care Soap 100g Cartons	942500 Nos	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
4	KSDL/2025-26/IND0982	Procurement of Herbal Care 100g Corrugated Boxes	6533 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
5	KSDL/2025-26/IND0983	Procurement of Shrink Sleeves for Hand Wash Bottle top cover	1268717 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
6	KSDL/2025-26/IND0984	Procurement of Cellophane Paper Wrapper Reams	227500 Ream	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
7	KSDL/2025-26/IND0985	Procurement of Gift Pack Cartons	118083 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
8	KSDL/2025-26/IND0986	Procurement of Gift Pack Plastic Container	118083 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
9	KSDL/2025-26/IND0987	Procurement of Gift Pack Corrugated Boxes	9799 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
10	KSDL/2025-26/IND0988	Procurement of Ethylene Vinyl Acetate (EVA) based hot melt adhesive	8667 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
11	KSDL/2025-26/IND0989	Procurement of Mysore Sandal Kleenol 5ltr PET bottle / Can with inner lid and cap	81656 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
12	KSDL/2025-26/IND0990	Procurement of Mysore Sandal Kleenol 5 ltr. Corrugated Boxes with Partition and Top plate	16331 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
13	KSDL/2025-26/IND0991	Procurement of Mysore Sandal Kleenol 5 ltr. Sticker (Front & Back)	82469 Nos.	21-02-2026	04-03-2026
14	KSDL/2025-26/IND0992	Procurement of Mysore Sandal Gold (125g x 3 Nos.) Cartons	261083 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
15	KSDL/2025-26/IND0993	Procurement of Mysore Sandal Gold (125gX3 Nos.) Corrugated Boxes	8710 Nos.	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
16	KSDL/2025-26/IND1002	Procurement of Tetramethyl perhydronaptho furan Ambroxan	900 Kgs	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
17	KSDL/2025-26/IND1003	Procurement of Coumarin crystals	29500 Kgs	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
18	KSDL/2025-26/IND1004	Procurement of Clove Leaf Oil	45900 Kgs	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
19	KSDL/2025-26/IND1005	Procurement of Habanolide/Globalide	8300 Kgs	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
20	KSDL/2025-26/IND1006	Procurement of Citronellol	25700 Kgs	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
21	KSDL/2025-26/IND1007	Procurement of Geranium oil	8500 Kgs	21-02-2026	26-03-2026
22	KSDL/2025-26/IND1010	Procurement of Kathon CG	7700 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
23	KSDL/2025-26/IND1011	Procurement of Almond oil	13600 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
24	KSDL/2025-26/IND1012	Procurement of Cocamidopropyl Betaine (CAPB)	40 MT	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
25	KSDL/2025-26/IND1013	Procurement of Cos Oil Yellow 4G (D & C YELLOW No. 11) CI No. 47000	7000 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
26	KSDL/2025-26/IND1014	Procurement of Emulsifier	34000 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
27	KSDL/2025-26/IND1015	Procurement of Carbopol Aqua SF-1	2100 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
28	KSDL/2025-26/IND1016	Procurement of Caustic Soda Lye (on 100 percent basis)	70 MT	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
29	KSDL/2025-26/IND1017	Procurement of Amisoft	3600 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
30	KSDL/2025-26/IND1018	Procurement of Tetra sodium salt of etidronic acid/Aqua acid - 1054 CG	6500 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
31	KSDL/2025-26/IND1019	Procurement of LIQUID PARAFFIN LIGHT	11000 Kgs	21-02-2026	09-03-2026
32	KSDL/2025-26/IND1020	Procurement of EDTA Liquid	110 MT	21-02-2026	09-03-2026

For any further queries/clarifications please contact the undersigned.
Sd/- Asst. General Manager (Materials)

KYIV

Three killed in Russian air strikes on eve of Ukraine war anniversary

REUTERS

Russian strikes killed three people and wounded several others overnight, regional authorities said on Monday, as Moscow continued its assaults on the eve of the war's four-year anniversary. Two people were killed in the Odesa region and one person died in Zaporizhzhia following Russian drone attacks. AFP

LONDON

Peter Mandelson, ex-U.K. envoy to Washington, held in Epstein case

AP

U.K. police on Monday arrested Peter Mandelson, former envoy to the U.S., amid allegations over his ties to disgraced U.S. financier Jeffrey Epstein. Mr. Mandelson was sacked by Prime Minister Keir Starmer as envoy last year when an earlier release of documents linked to Epstein showed the extent of their friendship. AFP

DAMASCUS

U.S. begins withdrawing its forces from key military garrison in Syria

REUTERS

U.S. forces began pulling out of their largest base in Syria on Monday, Syrian military and security sources said, part of a wider departure as the U.S.-allied government in Damascus consolidates control. A military official said the pullout from Qasrak base in Hasakeh was expected to take about a month. REUTERS

GENEVA

UN chief decries 'rule of force', says human rights under attack globally

AP

United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres warned on Monday that "the rule of force" was spreading, as the powerful trample on international law. "Human rights are under a full-scale attack around the world," Mr. Guterres told the opening of the UN Human Rights Council's annual session in Geneva. AFP

Kim retains leadership of North Korea's ruling party

Associated Press
SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was re-elected to the top post of the ruling Workers' Party, with delegates crediting him for bolstering the country's nuclear arsenal and strengthening its regional standing, state media reported on Monday.

The report from the party congress, which began last Thursday, where Mr. Kim is expected to outline his political and military goals for the next five years, suggests he will double down on accelerating a nuclear arsenal already equipped with missiles capable of threatening Asian U.S. allies and the American mainland.

The party also released a new roster for its powerful 138-member central committee.

Under party rules, the congress, which Mr. Kim has held every five years since 2016, elects the general secretary to serve as the party's top representative and leader. Mr. Kim, 42, has held the party's top post throughout his rule.

Witkoff reiterates red lines; Iran says U.S. talks yielded encouraging signals

Tehran is committed to peace and stability in the region, says President Pezeshkian, adding that recent talks with the U.S. involved the exchange of practical proposals; U.S. envoy says Trump's red lines include 'zero uranium enrichment' for Iran

Stanly Johny

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday expressed cautious optimism about talks with Washington, saying the discussions involved exchange of "practical proposals", while Steve Witkoff, the U.S. special envoy for West Asia, said President Donald Trump had set clear red lines regarding Iran's nuclear programme.

Treading the line: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a meeting in Tehran on Saturday. REUTERS

"Iran is committed to peace and stability in the region. Recent negotiations involved the exchange of practical proposals and yielded encouraging signals," Mr. Pezeshkian wrote in a social media post. "However, we continue to closely monitor U.S. actions and have made all necessary preparations for any potential scenario," he added.

Mr. Pezeshkian's comment came immediately after Oman's Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi said a third round of talks between the U.S. and Iran would take place on February 26 in Geneva. "Pleased to confirm U.S.-Iran negotiations are now set for Geneva this Thursday with a positive push to go the extra mile towards finalising the deal," Mr. Albusaidi wrote in a post.

Oman mediated the first round of the talks in Muscat on February 6 and the second round in Geneva on February 17. While Iran claimed "guiding principles" of future talks were agreed between the two sides on February 17, the U.S. side was less optimistic and said gaps remained.

Trump 'curious'

Mr. Witkoff, the chief U.S. negotiator with Iran, said in an interview on Sunday, the President was "curious" on why Iran had not capitulated under American pressure. "The President asked me that this morning, and he's – I don't wanna use the word frustrated... because he understands he's got plenty of alternatives, but... he's curious as to why they haven't, I don't wanna use the word capitulated, but why they haven't capitulated," Mr. Witkoff told Lara Trump, the President's daughter-in-law, on *Fox News*.

He added that Mr. Trump is wondering "why, under this pressure, with the amount of sea power and naval power over there, why haven't they come to us and said, 'we profess we don't want a weapon, so here's what we're prepared to do?'"

The U.S. has deployed dozens of fighter jets, warships, two aircraft carriers, missile defence shields and fuel tankers to the region, with the President threatening to use force if Iran failed to make a deal. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has warned that any attack on the Islamic Republic would trigger a regional war.

Mr. Witkoff added that Mr. Trump gave him and Jared Kushner, Mr. Trump's son-in-law, who is also part of the negotiating team, the administration's red lines. "Zero, zero enrichment; we have to get the material back," he said, referring to Iran's nuclear enrichment capability and its stockpile of highly enriched uranium. After the June 2025 attack by Israel and the U.S. on Iran's nuclear facilities, Mr. Trump had claimed that the U.S. had "obliterated" Iran's nuclear programme. But Mr. Witkoff indicated on Sunday that Iran still possessed highly enriched uranium.

"They say it's all about a civilian programme, yet they've been enriching far beyond what's needed for civil nuclear use, up to 60%. They're probably a week away from having industrial-grade, bomb-making material. That's extremely dangerous, and I can't accept that," Mr. Witkoff said.

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told *CBS* that there was still a "good chance" for a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue. "One fact is there, that if they (the U.S.) want to find a resolution for Iran's peaceful nuclear program, the only way is diplomacy," he said.

Yunus did not follow the Constitution, says Bangladesh President

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin slammed Muhammad Yunus, who headed the country's interim administration after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in August 2024 till the February election, saying he "did not follow the country's Constitution".

In an interview to Bangladesh newspaper *Kaaler Kantho*, Mr. Shahabuddin revealed a stark picture of the chaos that unfolded in the country during the interim government's rule saying that the Yunus administration did not brief him about important decisions, including the trade agreement between Bangladesh and the United States that was announced a few days before the election.

Mr. Shahabuddin recalled the 18 months of the Yunus administration and said that there were attempts to "destroy the law and order situation in the country and create a constitutional crisis".

"The Constitution says that the chief advisor has to brief me after every foreign trip. But Dr. Yunus did not update me. He went abroad some 14 or 15 times, but he never met me after those trips," he said.

The President said Mr. Yunus did not take him into confidence even when the U.S.-Bangladesh deal was signed. "I should have been briefed when the deal was signed... It is a constitutional mandate. But he (Mr. Yunus) did not do that, neither verbally nor in writing."

On August 8, 2024, Mr. Shahabuddin administered Mr. Yunus, a Nobel laureate, the oath of office as the interim government's chief advisor. "I took the initiative to form the interim government. But there was no coordination from the chief advisor's side after that. He never came to meet me, and kept me in the dark," he said.

The President also alleged that the Yunus administration deliberately kept him on the sidelines and stopped him from travelling abroad on two occasions.

In the limelight: Director Paul Thomas Anderson with the cast and crew of 'One Battle After Another' at the 79th British Academy Film Awards in London on Sunday. AP

One Battle After Another wins best film at BAFTAs

Associated Press
LONDON

Paul Thomas Anderson's politically charged thriller *One Battle After Another* won six prizes, including best picture, at the British Academy Film Awards on Sunday, building momentum ahead of Hollywood's Academy Awards next month.

Blues-steeped vampire epic *Sinners* and gothic horror story *Frankenstein* won three awards each, while Shakespearean family tragedy *Hamnet* won two including best British film.

Mr. Anderson's explosive film about a group of revolutionaries in chaotic conflict with the state, won awards for directing, adapted screenplay, cinematography and editing, as well as for Sean Penn's supporting performance as an obsessed military officer.

Bookies' favourite Jessie Buckley won the best actress prize for playing grieving mother Agnes Hathaway, wife of William Shakespeare, in *Hamnet*. Ms. Buckley, 36, is the first Irish performer to win a best actress prize at the awards.

Wunmi Mosaku's performance as herbalist and healer Annie in *Sinners* got her the supporting actress award.

In a major upset, Robert Aramayo won the best actor category for his performance in *I Swear*, a fact-based British indie drama about a campaigner for people with Tourette syndrome. The Rising Star award, which is decided by public vote, also went to Mr. Aramayo.

The 33-year-old British actor called the victory over Ethan Hawke, Michael B. Jordan, Leonardo DiCaprio and Timothee Chalamet "absolutely mad."

Hollywood stars and British celebrities, from Paddington Bear to the Prince and Princess of Wales, gathered at London's Royal Festival Hall for the awards.

Sentimental Value won the prize for the best film not in English.

The best-documentary prize went to *Mr. Nobody Against Putin*, about a Russian teacher who documented the propaganda imposed on Russian schools after the invasion of Ukraine.

Donna Langley, the U.K.-born chairwoman of NBC Universal Entertainment, was awarded the Academy's highest honour, the BAFTA fellowship.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER,
CENTRAL (R&B) CIRCLE , BHUBANESWAR.
Mail i.d. : seccbbsr@gmail.com

E-procurement Tender Call Notice No.27 of 2025-26

No.955 (Estg.) Bhubaneswar the 21st February-2026

The Chief Construction Engineer, Central (R&B) Circle Bhubaneswar on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids for one number building work to be received in online bidding, double cover system for Improvement works as detailed in :https://tendersodisha.gov.in. The details of bid documents will be available in the above website **from 5.00 P.M. of 25.02.2026 to 5.00 P.M of 06.03.2026**. The bidders must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate of Class II or III. Bids received online shall be opened **at 5.30 P.M of 06.03.2026** in the Office of the Chief Construction Engineer, Central (R&B) Circle Bhubaneswar.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in. Addendum / Corrigendum, if required, will be available only in the Website.

Sd/- Er.M.K.Mahananda
Chief Construction Engineer, Central (R&B) Circle, Bhubaneswar.

34001/116/2526 OIPR-34001/34156/1/25-26/0008

Odisha Police
Office of the D.G & I.G. of Police, Odisha, Cuttack
Tel. : 0671-2304001, Website :www.odishapolice.gov.in , Email : dirsfsl.orpol@nic.in

RFP No. 40-RFP-Biological Comparison Microscope - 2025-2026 Date : 21.02.2026

Online Bids through e-Tender Portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in are invited from the eligible bidders for Supply of **Biological Comparison Microscope with Photography attachment & imaging software** for Odisha Police, Odisha, Cuttack, during the current financial year 2025-26 as per the schedule mentioned below.

Sl.No.	Name of Item	Approximate quantity
1.	40-RFP-Biological Comparison Microscope -2025-2026	01 No

Events	Date
RFP Issue Date	21.02.2026
RFP Submission Due Date and time	02.03.2026 at 10.00 AM
Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids	02.03.2026 at 04.00 PM
Bid to RA enabled	Yes
Tender Document fee {(Non-refundable Rs.590/-{Rs.500/-+ 18% GST (Rs. 90/-)}	In favour of A.I.G. of Police (Prov.), Odisha, Cuttack payable at Cuttack. (Demand Draft)
EMD (Earnest Money Deposit) Rs: 60,000/- (Sixty thousand only)	In favour of A.I.G. of Police (Prov.), Odisha, Cuttack payable at Cuttack. (Demand Draft)

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites : https://tendersodisha.gov.in . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

A.I.G. of Police (Provisioning), Odisha, Cuttack.
(Tender Calling Authority)

12001/25/2526 OIPR-12001/12018/1/25-26/0002

Odisha Police
Office of the D.G & I.G. of Police, Odisha, Cuttack
Tel. : 0671-2304001, Website :www.odishapolice.gov.in , Email: igops.orpol@od.gov.in

RFP No. 39-RFP-Digital Hand Held Equipment-2025-2026 Date :19.02.2026

Online Bids through e-Tender Portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in are invited from the eligible bidders for **Supply of Digital Hand Held Equipment for Odisha Police, Odisha, Cuttack**, during the current financial year 2025-26 as per the schedule mentioned below.

Sl.No.	Name of Item	Approximate quantity
1.	39-RFP- Digital Hand Held Equipment -2025-2026	60 Nos

Events	Date
RFP Issue Date	19.02.2026
RFP Submission Due Date and time	27.02.2026 at 11.00 AM
Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids	27.02.2026 at 03.00 PM
Bid to RA enabled	Yes
Tender Document fee {(Non-refundable Rs.590/-{Rs.500/-+ 18% GST (Rs. 90/-)}	In favour of A.I.G. of Police (Prov.), Odisha, Cuttack payable at Cuttack. (Demand Draft)
EMD (Earnest Money Deposit) Rs: 51,000/- (Fiftyone thousand only)	In favour of A.I.G. of Police (Prov.), Odisha, Cuttack payable at Cuttack. (Demand Draft)

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: https://tendersodisha.gov.in . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

A.I.G. of Police (Provisioning), Odisha, Cuttack.
(Tender Calling Authority)

12001/24/2526 OIPR-12001/12018/1/25-26/0001

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD
(DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF KERALA)
Head Office : Thycaud, Thiruvananthapuram-14,
(Telephone No. 0471-2945600, 2945646
E-mail : edrugs.kmscl@kerala.gov.in,
website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in, CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616

No.KMSCL/ED/32/2025 Date :21.02.2026

RE- TENDER NOTICE

Online bids are invited from manufacturers/direct importers / loan licensees on behalf of Department of Health, Govt of Kerala for the procurement insecticides for Surveillance and Control of Communicable Disease under Plan Fund 2025-26.

Sl. No.	Tender No. and Date	No. of items
1.	KMSCL/ED/INS-PLAN/RT/2026/04 dtd. 21/02/2026	4

The last date and time of online uploading of tenders will be 09.03.2026, 5.00 pm. The date and time of opening of Technical bid will be 11.03.2026 11.30 am. Tenders shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**.

(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (Tender Inviting Authority)

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only Through KPP Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (UWP), 5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009

Sl No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
IFT No:BWSSB/CE(UWP)/ACE(WWM-VV-W/DCE(WWM-E&W)/TA-2/748/2025-26 Date: 23-02-2026		
1.	Work of Providing and Laying 800mm dia RCC/DWC pipe line from Kaveripura Ground to existing 800mm dia pipeline at Baleyanakere, Kamakshipalya, Bengaluru (4th Call)	₹ 395.69 Lakhs / ₹ 5.94 Lakhs
IFT No:BWSSB/CE(UWP)/ACE(WWM-VV-W/DCE(WWM-E&W)/TA-2/750/2025-26 Date: 23-02-2026		
2.	Work of Providing and Laying 400mm dia DWC SN-8 Class pipe line from 3rd Cross Malleshwaram to Sheshadripuram Main Road Kumara Park West of Drain No.V-110, Coming under AEE(WWM-V.V)-1-1 sub division, Bengaluru (2nd Call)	₹ 133.26 Lakhs / ₹ 2.00 Lakhs

For all the above Works, last date and time for Receipt of tenders **:05-03-2026** at **17:00** hrs. The Technical bids will be Opened on **06-03-2026** at **17:30** hrs.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (UWP)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours. DIPR/SI/5830/2025-26

BAG OF TRICKS

Motie's wrist spin has been beneficial for us, says Hope

EMMANUAL YOGINI

Motie has been one of our best bowlers, and it is great to see him come back having used that time (away from the game) wisely. He has clearly worked on his skills and added something extra with his wrist spin, which has been very beneficial for us — West Indies captain Shai Hope on left-arm spinner Gudakesh Motie.

BANG BANG

West Indies-Zimbabwe match sees 31 maximums, a T20 WC record

EMMANUAL YOGINI

The combined tally of 31 sixes in the Super Eight clash between West Indies (19 maximums) and Zimbabwe (12) in Mumbai on Monday is the highest in a T20 World Cup game. The previous record was the 30 maximums smacked in the Ireland-Netherlands game from the 2014 showpiece.

INVALUABLE ADVICE

Learnt slower balls from Bravo during my time at CSK: Ngidi

FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

South Africa pacer Lungi Ngidi revealed that he learnt the art of bowling slower deliveries from Dwayne Bravo during his time at Chennai Super Kings in 2018. "I was with Bravo... the entire IPL, that is all I worked on. I was not playing (much), so I got time to practice it. When I got back to South Africa, I tried to perfect that ball".

TALISMAN

It is good that teams are preparing for Tariq, says Pakistan's Farhan

AFP

If you give 20-24 runs in a T20 match, that is a big deal. At times, Usman has gone for less than that. It is good that teams are preparing for him. They are worried about him and his bowling action. I think it is good for Pakistan's confidence — Pakistan's Sahibzada Farhan on spinner Usman Tariq.

Hetmyer, Powell lead Caribbean carnival at the Wankhede

The two batters smash 122 off just 52 balls for the third wicket as the West Indies amasses 254 for six, the second-highest total in the history of the tournament; left-arm spin twins Motie and Hosein combine to shoot out Zimbabwe for 147

T20 WORLD CUP

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Shimron Hetmyer was searing. Rovman Powell was remorseless. And when the all-rounders muscled in, West Indies turned the Super Eight Group 1 clash into a carnival of Caribbean carnage, clubbing Zimbabwe into submission at the Wankhede Stadium on a manic Monday night.

Powered by a 122-run partnership off just 52 balls between Hetmyer (85, 34b, 7x4, 7x6) and Powell (59, 35b, 4x4, 4x6), West Indies racked up a gargantuan 254 for six – the second-highest total in Men's T20 World Cup history. Zimbabwe, burdened by the asking rate and the occasion, wilted in reply and was bundled out for 147 in 17.4 overs. The two-time champion won by 107 runs even as Brad Evans waged a lone battle with a 21-ball 43.

When Sikandar Raza opted to chase, he would have hoped the in-form Blessing Muzarabani and the returning Richard Ngarava would exploit the evening sea breeze. And there was an early opening. Had Tashinga Musekiwa held on to a chance at deep square-leg in the fourth over off Muzarabani, Hetmyer's evening would have been cut short.

Making a statement: Hetmyer and Powell carted the Zimbabwean bowlers to all parts of the ground. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Instead, the left-hander unleashed mayhem.

Hetmyer transformed the middle overs into a highlight reel of leg-side brutality, his 108-metre six off Raza – which clattered into the North Stand's top tier railing – the standout strike of the night. Powell, patient for his first 20 deliveries, then joined the range-hitting revelry with ruthless precision.

West Indies plundered 19 sixes and 16 fours. Only three overs – the first two and the 11th – passed without a boundary. If the first 10 overs yielded 115 runs, the last 10 produced a whopping 139.

With scoreboard pressure sky-high, Zimbabwe unravelled. Left-arm spin twins Akeal Hosein and Gudakesh Motie methodically dismantled the chase. For Zimbabwe, it was a harsh initiation into the Super Eight, while for the West Indies, it was a statement steeped in swagger.

The scores: West Indies 254/6 in 20 overs (Shimron Hetmyer 85, Rovman Powell 59, Sherfane Rutherford 31 n.o., Richard Ngarava 2/47, Blessing Muzarabani 2/42) bt Zimbabwe 147 in 17.4 overs (Brad Evans 43, Akeal Hosein 3/28, Matthew Forde 2/27, Gudakesh Motie 4/28).
Toss: Zimbabwe.
PoM: Hetmyer.

India should turn smarter after Proteas reality check

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
AHMEDABAD

If the opening match against the United States of America was seen as a muffled wake-up call, the encounter involving South Africa was a rude jolt. India's winning streak in the ICC Twenty20 World Cup was finally snapped as the Proteas flourished at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Sunday.

The Men in Blue had their rivals hobbling at 20 for three but the middle overs choke never happened. David Miller and Dewald Brevis stitched a kinetic 97-run partnership. And Varun Chakaravarthy's mystery element was snuffed out as the left-right combine of Miller and Brevis remained busy.

Lack of discipline

A lack of discipline was evident, too, as India conceded 11 extras. Even if in the death, the splendid Jasprit Bumrah pegged back the visitors, South Africa's 187 for seven was a competitive score. The fans, tipping over 80,000, were in good cheer before it all went downhill for the defending champion.

Through this championship, India has tended to lose its opening wicket with hardly anything on the scoreboard. The highest first-wicket partnership so far has been the 25 between Ishan Kishan and Sanju Samson against Namibia. Otherwise, it has always been a case of a single digit and an instant breach.

Abhishek Sharma's sudden dip in form, evident in three zeros and a brief 15, has meant that the middle-order is often forced to salvage the innings. In a fickle arena that the T20Is are, Abhishek should be able to turn it around, but still, in a global tournament, there is not much elbow room.

Need of the hour: The Men in Blue have to pull up their socks and put in a much better display from here on. VIJAY SONEJI

Suryakumar Yadav has resigned himself to be the binding glue instead of being the force-multiplier that the captain usually is. It is a direct reflection of the muddled top-order in which Tilak Varma is yet to fully get into his groove.

This young Indian outfit is obviously part of the selector's long-term plan. Still, men like K.L. Rahul, Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Rishabh Pant have been kept out.

Add to that the retirements of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, and it is imperative for Suryakumar's men to get past these massive vacant shoes.

Looking ahead, the think-tank has to figure out if it is prudent to bench vice-captain Axar Patel. The games against Zimbabwe and the West Indies are 'must-win' ones, especially after India's Net Run Rate plunged to -3.8. This still remains a good team, but some operational rust has to be quickly sandpapered away.

Buoyant England takes on Pakistan

Abhishek Saini
PALLEKELE

England will be keen on extending its winning momentum and securing a semifinal berth when it faces Pakistan in their T20 World Cup Super Eight match at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium here on Tuesday.

Having breezed past Sri Lanka in its opener, a second win in Group 2 will assure Harry Brook's side of a place in the top four. But a straightforward route will emerge for England only after it clears Pakistan's spin hurdle.

The English batters were made to sweat by Sri Lanka's Dunith Wellalage and Maheesh Theekshana, who combined for five for 47 in eight overs on Sunday.

Pakistan's spinners – greater in number and variety – can put England under an even sterner examination. Skipper Salman Agha is likely to deploy the tweakers for at least three-fourths of the innings, including the death phase (16-20), where Usman Tariq has nabbed seven batters at an economy of just 6.27.

Nippy customer: Archer will pose a stiff challenge to Pakistan. AFP

England's batting problems are exacerbated by the lean run of Jos Buttler, who has single-digit scores in his last three outings.

But some batting reinforcement might come its way on Tuesday, given the fresh pitch in use and dry conditions before the contest.

For all the spin at its disposal, Pakistan would not mind a slightly easier surface if it can spark its dormant batting order to life. After a washout against New Zealand in Colombo, Pakistan needs a win to keep its fate in its own hands, which means there is little room for errors.

Sahibzada Farhan has been the silver lining for Pakistan's batting this tournament but would be on his toes against Jofra Archer's nip and pace.

England's spinners, led by Will Jacks' three for 22, tore through Sri Lanka's top-order in the last match. And if offered conducive conditions, would be waiting to show they are no less than their Pakistan counterparts.

SUPER EIGHT

Today's match

England vs Pakistan

Pallekele, 7 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 31

England 21 | Pakistan 9 | NR 1

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & JIOHOTSTAR

Farhan wants Pakistan's batting unit to shoulder collective responsibility

Abhishek Saini
PALLEKELE

Pakistan opener Sahibzada Farhan on Monday backed the side's misfiring batting unit to step up against England in their T20 World Cup Super Eight match here.

Area of concern

"We have collapsed in our batting. We are doing well with our bowling, the spinners particularly. But we will have to think about batting because if you look at T20 cricket, your top three or four should be able to score more runs. We have not been able to do that.

Unpredictability

"Sometimes the top-order gives you a good partnership, sometimes it's the middle-order. T20 is such that it doesn't depend on one person. I think this is a team game and everyone should take responsibility," Farhan said.

Having a ball: Farhan has been the highest run-scorer so far in this tournament. AFP

With 220 runs from four innings, Farhan is the highest run-scorer this tournament. Against England, Farhan is likely to be tested by Jofra Archer up front. But the 29-year-old is ready for the challenge.

"It is no big deal to face Archer. We have faced him earlier too. We also have good wickets back home and bowlers who can bowl at 145 (kmph). He must have planned how to bowl against me. But I have also planned. Hopefully, we will have a good contest," Farhan said.

Giant-killer J & K up against a classy Karnataka in maiden final

The two have been the most well-rounded sides this season; the summit clash is set to feature this edition's highest run-getter Smaran, and the second and third-best wicket-takers Nabi and Shreyas; the pitch has a green look on match eve

RANJI TROPHY

N. Sudarshan
HUBBALLI

Face-off: Opener Rahul and pace spearhead Nabi could prove crucial to the fortunes of their respective sides. K. MURALI KUMAR

Kashmir to Kanyakumari is a slogan that is often invoked to epitomise the geographical grandeur, vision and diversity of India. In sport, few tournaments symbolise this quite like the Ranji Trophy, the nation's prestigious domestic cricket competition.

As many as 38 teams take part, and matches are held in every nook and corner – in foothills of the Himalayas, the fertile Deccan Plateau, against the backdrop of the tea gardens of the North East and near the Great Rann of Kutch.

From Tuesday, this premier tournament will get a final befitting its stature when Karnataka takes on Jammu & Kashmir at the KSCA Rajnagar Stadium here.

Karnataka is not quite Kanyakumari but they are close enough, and there hasn't been a Ranji final between two regions in Independent India that are as topographically distant.

In terms of cricketing excellence this season, they are joined at the hip.

Karnataka and J & K are the most well-rounded sides and the summit clash is set to feature this edition's highest run-scorer R. Smaran (950), and the second and third-best wicket-takers in Auqib Nabi (55) and Shreyas Gopal (46).

Karnataka is pedigreed, having won the coveted trophy eight times. It has a star-studded team with Test players like K.L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Devdutt Padikkal, Karun Nair and Prasidh Krishna. As many as four – Rahul, Karun, Shreyas and Mayank – were part of the southern powerhouse's last Ranji-winning squad in 2014-15.

J & K is an upstart turned top dog, looking for its maiden red-ball crown in its first-ever final. It has momentum, having felled fancied outfits like Madhya Pradesh and Bengal away from home in the knockouts.

And there is both hunger and belief, qualities best exemplified in the success of pacer Nabi (99 wickets in two seasons) and the transcendence of captain Paras Dogra (only the second batter after Wasim Jaffer to score more than 10,000 runs in the Ranji Trophy).

Fitness worries

However, for these two line-ups to bring their A-games, it is not just about form but also fitness. While skipper Padikkal expressed happiness with his recovery from the finger injury, J & K had a scare on Monday when all-rounder Vanshaj Sharma limped out of training and opener Shubham Khajuria was stretchered off with a back strain.

Conditions will be testing as well, for day-time temperatures are set to hover in the mid-30s.

The pitch wore a green look on match eve and was being watered. If it holds up for five days, Karnataka's first home final since Mysuru 2010 could be a cracking affair.

The teams (from): Karnataka: Devdutt Padikkal (Capt.), K.L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Karun Nair, R. Smaran, Kruthik Krishna, Shreyas Gopal, Vidyadhar Patil, Prasidh Krishna, V. Vyshak, Shikhar Shetty, Mohsin Khan, K.V. Aneesh, K.L. Shrijith & Vidwath Kaverappa.

Jammu & Kashmir: Paras Dogra (Capt.), Shubham Khajuria, Yawer Hassan, Shubham Pundir, Abdul Samad, Kanhaiya Wadhawan, Abid Mushtaq, Auqib Nabi, Yudhvir Singh, Vanshaj Sharma, Sunil Kumar, Kawal Preet Singh, Sahil Lotra, Dikshant Kundal & Umar Nazir.

In-form batting line-up gives freedom to the bowlers, says Padikkal

N. Sudarshan
HUBBALLI

Glory beckons: Dogra and Padikkal will be keen to land the big prize. K. MURALI KUMAR

Karnataka may not have had as sensational a victory as Jammu & Kashmir in its Ranji Trophy semifinal, but captain Devdutt Padikkal said that overcoming Uttarakhand – by virtue of the first-innings lead – will hold his side in good stead ahead of Tuesday's final.

The eight-time champion totalled as many as 1,059 runs to drown Uttarakhand, with the captain himself notching up his highest First Class score of 232.

"Scoring over 1,000 runs is definitely a big confidence boost," the 25-year-old said on Monday.

"Not just the batsmen but for the bowlers too. Knowing that the batting line-up is able to put on a show like that gives them confidence and the freedom to really enjoy themselves with the ball."

Padikkal expressed hope that the Hubballi wicket will be as run-filled. In its last four visits to the crease here across three matches, Karnataka has scored in excess of 500 thrice.

Two of those contests have ended in victories and it has taken the first-innings lead in the other.

The home team also has a 4-0 win-loss record against J & K in the Ranji Trophy.

"Looks like a good pitch," Padikkal observed.

"We have always enjoyed playing in Hubballi. It is a beautiful city to play cricket in. Hopefully, it will be good for us".

We will be sticking to the basics like we have done before: Dogra

N. Sudarshan
HUBBALLI

The first six questions in Monday's captains' media briefing ahead of the Ranji Trophy final between Karnataka and Jammu & Kashmir were all addressed to the home skipper Devdutt Padikkal.

J & K captain Paras Dogra sat quietly but all the time displaying a quiet confidence. In a way, it was representative of his outfit's season – unfancied, unheralded but with a proud seat at Indian cricket's high table.

"We are relaxed and there is not too much tension," the 41-year-old declared on the eve of his side's maiden Ranji summit clash.

"It is a very big thing to play the final and we are trying to be calm and composed.

"We will be sticking to the basics like we have done before."

One of the stand-out features of J & K's journey this edition has been the outright victories it has registered against five former champions in Delhi, Hyderabad, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bengal.

Facing another big team, replete with stars, doesn't appear to faze its players.

"We have beaten sides in their homes [Delhi, MP and Bengal] and that gives us a big boost," Dogra said.

"We have played star-studded teams before. We have good skill level and a good batting line-up. So, we are confident."

India should look at Europe to get the system right: Catala

FOOTBALL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
KOCHI

Catala. P.K. AJITH KUMAR

It wasn't the best of starts. It wasn't the most ideal of situations. But, David Catala isn't worried. Not yet.

Kerala Blasters has lost both of its opening matches, and on the eve of Sunday's ISL match against Mumbai City at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, till late into the evening, there was uncertainty about the very fixture, because the ground's owner wanted a higher rent. So it wasn't just football on the coach's mind.

The Spaniard, in his maiden ISL, is glad that his boys managed to come up with a fighting performance against Mumbai, despite all the off-field drama. "I asked them just to forget everything else, and to focus on the game," Catala told *The Hindu* here on Monday. "I said to them that the thing we could control is football. The other things we cannot control. And all this happened after months of uncertainty when the players did not know if the league would take place at all."

Though Blasters lost 0-1, Catala said the team performed much better than it did in the opening encounter against Mohun Bagan Super Giant in Kolkata. "We are improving, but we need to do more, especially in defensive terms," he said. "But I am happy with the talents I have got, whether foreign or Indian."

He admitted nevertheless that Adrian Luna was missed. The gifted Uruguayan was one of the biggest casualties of the ISL's uncertainty as he was released on loan to Indonesian club Persik Kediri.

"India has the talent in football, but there is a lot to be done on the organisational front," Catala said. "I think India needs to look closely at leagues in Europe and try to implement a similar system, especially in setting up academies and youth leagues."

He feels events like the Super League Kerala could help. "I was impressed with the quality of football and the young Indian players, like Muhammad Ajsal and Ebindas, both of whom are with us at Blasters. The standard of the ISL, too, is high; I had been following the league even before I came to India."

He feels there is no reason why India should not play the World Cup one day. "Given the population, India should be able to get enough top-quality players," he said. "And India should also get inspiration from the small countries that have qualified for the World Cup."

Indian women hope to continue momentum, Aussies eye revenge

INDIA IN AUSTRALIA

Press Trust of India
BRISBANE

In full flow: India's batting mainstay Smriti has been among the runs. X@BCCIWOMEN

Having secured a stunning T20I series triumph, reigning world champion Indian women will have the psychological edge when it takes on Australia in the first ODI here on Tuesday.

India had beaten Australia in the World Cup semifinal last year in Navi Mumbai and the host would be looking to avenge that stunning defeat.

What makes the series even more significant is the fact that one of Australia's greatest players, Alyssa Healy, will be making her swansong ODI appearance in the three-match rubber. She will be ending her illustrious career after the one-off Test against India starting on March 6 in Perth.

Healy will return to lead Australia after missing the three-match T20I series which India clinched 2-1 after winning the decider by 17 runs in Adelaide on Saturday. It was Australia's first bilateral series defeat since 2017.

Star leg-spinner Alana King is also coming to the ODI and Test sides after being overlooked for the T20I series.

In and out

For India, Kashvee Gautam, Harleen Deol and Pratika Rawal have come in to replace Arundhati Reddy, Bharti Fulmali, and Shreyanka Patil.

Star opener and India's batting mainstay Smriti Mandhana is in fine form after her match-winning 82 in the third T20I.

Jemimah Rodrigues, who made a spectacular 127 in India's five-wicket win over Australia in the ODI World Cup, will be another batter to watch out for. She contributed 59 and shared a 121-run partnership with Smriti in the T20I decider. India will also be banking on captain Harmanpreet Kaur to lend muscle to the batting.

In the bowling department, Renuka Singh and Shree Charani will go into the ODI series after being among the wickets in the T20Is while veteran Deepti Sharma would look to come good after a mediocre show in the shortest format.

There is no dearth of match-winners in the star-studded Australian side. The home team would seek inspiration from the likes of Ellyse Perry, Ashleigh Gardner, Beth Mooney, Tahlia McGrath, besides Healy and King, to make amends for the T20I series loss.

The teams (from):
Australia: Alyssa Healy (Capt.), Sophie Molineux (Vice-capt.), Darcie Brown, Nicola Carey, Ashleigh Gardner, Kim Garth, Alana King, Phoebe Litchfield, Beth Mooney, Tahlia McGrath, Ellyse Perry, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Voll, Georgia Wareham.
India: Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana (Vice-capt.), Shafali Verma, Renuka Thakur, Shree Charani, Vaishnavi Sharma, Kranti Gaud, Sneh Rana, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (wk), Uma Chetry (wk), Amanjot Kaur, Jemimah Rodrigues, Kashvee Gautam, Harleen Deol, Pratika Rawal.
Match starts at 9.20 a.m. IST

Mumbai racks up a massive score in Nayudu Trophy quarterfinals

Sports Bureau

Mumbai piled on a mammoth 616 for seven to shut Karnataka out of the contest in the BCCI Col. C.K. Nayudu Trophy under-23 quarterfinal at the Sachin Tendulkar Gymkhana at Mumbai on Monday.

The scores:
Karnataka 240 vs. Mumbai 616/7 in 187 overs (Angkrish Raghuvanshi 92, Ayush Jethwa 151, Manan Bhatt 120, Abhigyan Kundu 159).

Railway women win

Railways defeated Karnataka by 18 runs in the BCCI senior women's one day trophy quarterfinal at Mohali.

The scores:
Railways 251/6 in 50 overs (Shipra Giri 126, Arushi Goel 43 n.o.) bt Karnataka 233/9 in 50 overs (Shubha Satheesh 43, Shishira Gowda 55, Niki Prasad 46).

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy (final): Star Sports Khel & JioHotstar, 9.20 a.m.

Australia Women vs India Women: 1st ODI, Star Sports 3 & JioHotstar, 9.30 a.m.

Men's T20 World Cup: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7 p.m.

ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.

Champions League play-offs: Sony Sports Ten 2, 5 & LIV, 11.15 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

Heroic: Eze tormented Spurs once again. REUTERS

Arsenal lords it over Tottenham; Barca wins

EURO LEAGUES

Associated Press
LONDON

Eberechi Eze reignited Arsenal's title ambitions in the Premier League by being the scourge of Tottenham once again.

Three months after scoring a hat trick against Spurs, the England midfielder netted two more goals against Arsenal's fiercest rival in a 4-1 away win on Sunday. Viktor Gyokeres also scored twice for the leader.

The Gunners regained their five-point lead, but Manchester City has a game in hand and still has to host Mikel Arteta's team in the league in mid-April.

In LaLiga, Barcelona took advantage of Real Madrid's stumble and regained the lead with a comfortable 3-0 win over relegation-threatened Levante.

Marc Bernal, Frenkie de Jong and Fermin Lopez scored a goal each as Barcelona ended a two-game losing streak to get back in front of rival Madrid, which lost 1-2 at Osasuna on Saturday.

Barcelona moved one point ahead of Madrid, which had won eight in a row in the league before losing to Osasuna.

"We know it isn't easy to start winning again after two defeats, but the team gave a very good response," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said.

In Serie A, AC Milan lost more ground to city rival Inter Milan after a 0-1 loss to Parma at home in a match which saw Milan midfielder Ruben Loftus-Cheek hospitalised after a collision with the Parma goalkeeper.

Top results:
Premier League: Tottenham 1 (Kolo Muani 34) lost to Arsenal 4 (Eze 32, 61, Gyokeres 47, 90+4).
LaLiga: Barcelona 3 (Bernal 4, De Jong 32, Lopez 81) bt Levante 0; Celta Vigo 2 (Aspas 85-pen, 90+5) bt Real Mallorca 0.
Villarreal 2 (Comesana 31, Gueye 45+6-pen) bt Valencia 1 (Ramazani 27-pen).
Serie A: AC Milan 0 lost to Parma 1 (Troilo 80); Roma 3 (Cristante 59, Ndicka 77, Pisilli 86) bt Cremonese 0.
Bundesliga: Heidenheim 3 (Dinkci 20, Ibrahimovic 34-pen, Conteh 82) drew with Stuttgart 3 (Fuehrich 5, Mittelstaedt 44-pen, Undav 88).

Ray of hope: Vaishnavi's performances are a shot in the arm for Indian women's tennis.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Vaishnavi keen to build on her impressive run

The excellent results in the W100 ITF tournament earn her 65 ranking points; the 21-year-old is currently India's No. 2 behind Sahaja

TENNIS

Nihit Sachdeva
CHENNAI

Vaishnavi Adkar may have been on the receiving end of a 6-0, 6-1 loss to Belgium's Hanne Vandewinkel, World No. 124, in just 56 minutes in the W100 ITF Bengaluru final on Sunday but her mere presence had ended a 17-year wait for Indian women's tennis.

No Indian woman had reached the summit clash of a tournament at a W100 or higher level since Sania Mirza's runner-up finish at the Pattaya Open, a WTA 250 event, in 2009. With a series of stunning performances on the KSLTA courts, the 21-year-old Vaishnavi, who hails from Pune, added her name to the mix as the country's search for a new female singles star.

Ranked 690 in the world, Vaishnavi needed a wildcard to enter the tournament. In the opening round, she took down fellow wildcard and 19-year-old Shruti Ahlawat. What followed was a streak of career-best wins over Japan's Mai Hontama (World No. 220), Australia's Taylah Preston (148) and Thailand's Lanlana Tararudee (126).

Her run in the Garden City came courtesy of a steady improvement in her first-serve percentage with every round and some fearless ball-striking, especially from the backhand wing.

"Serve is something that I've been working on a lot because I don't really have a big serve, but it has gotten better. It's helped me in getting more points. Backhand is something that comes very naturally to me since I started playing tennis. It is one of my favourite shots," said the 5'6" tall Vaishnavi, who recently joined the Rohan Bopanna Tennis Academy after training under Kedar Shah in Pune from 2014 to 2025.

World University Games bronze medallist Vaishnavi gained 65 ranking points, rising to 466 in the WTA Rankings and becoming India's No. 2 behind Sahaja Yamalapalli (397).

It also puts the reigning National Champion in contention for a spot in the Indian team for the Billie Jean King Cup Asia-Oceania tournament set to be held in April in New Delhi.

Mohun Bagan eases past Chennaiyin

ISL

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Mohun Bagan Super Giant continued its winning run in the Indian Super League with a comfortable 2-0 victory over Chennaiyin FC at the Salt Lake Stadium on Monday. Australian striker Jamie Maclaren opened the scoring late in the first half, while compatriot Dimitri Petratos sealed the win midway through the second period.

Mohun Bagan gradually built up momentum, consistently attacking through the flanks, with Liston Colaco and Brazilian Robson Robinho delivering repeated crosses into the Chennaiyin box. Despite sustained pressure, the visitors' defence held firm and denied any clear chances to Petratos and Maclaren.

The breakthrough came when Anirudh Thapa delivered a precise through-pass that split the CFC defence and found Maclaren, who calmly slotted the ball past substitute goalkeeper Samik Mitra. Chennaiyin had earlier been forced into a change after first-choice 'keeper Mohammad Nawaz was injured in a goalmouth collision around the half-hour mark.

After the restart, the home team pressed for a second goal to secure the contest. The insurance strike arrived in the 65th minute. Left-back Subhasish Bose whipped in a pinpoint cross to the far post, where Petratos met it with a powerful volley. Although Mitra managed to get a hand to the ball, he could not prevent it from bulging the net.

The result marked Mohun Bagan's second consecutive win of the campaign, which took its tally to six points from two outings. Chennaiyin suffered its second successive loss.

The result: Mohun Bagan Super Giant 2 (Jamie Maclaren 45+3, Dimitri Petratos 65) bt Chennaiyin FC 0.

On the prowl: Petratos' second-half goal sealed Bagan's win.
DEBASISH BHADURI

Gill, Abhishek, Nain, Rishabh and Samrat in the fray

SPORTSTAR ACES 2026 #IndiaTriumphs

Sports Bureau

Taking on the leadership challenge head-on, Shubman Gill displayed the best of his batting ability during the Test series in England, and has also assumed charge of India's ODI team ahead of the next World Cup cycle. Gill's opening partner for Punjab, Abhishek Sharma, took the T20 world by storm, adding a new gear at the top of the order with his belligerent batting.

Forward Abhishek Nain shone brightest as Indian hockey had a subdued 2025, banging in goals in the FIH Pro League and the Asia Cup. Joining him in the shortlist is compound archer Rishabh Yadav, who enjoyed a breakthrough year, winning medals in the World Archery Championships. Samrat Rana became the first Indian pistol shooter to win a senior World Championships title in an Olympic discipline.

All these performers have been nominated for the coveted Sportstar of the Year (Male) honour in the eighth edition of the *Sportstar* Aces Awards. Vote for your favourite star by scanning the QR code until February 28.

Additionally, there are 19 Jury Awards, which will be deliberated on by an elite panel headed by legendary Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.

Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra, former India hockey captain M. M. Somaya, chess great Viswanathan Anand, and Olympians Anjali Bhagwat and Aparna Popat complete the jury.

There will also be a separate Chairperson's Award for Sports for Social Good, which will honour individuals or organisations that have used the power of sports to make our world a better place.

Bindra's tenure as IOC athletes' commission vice-chair ends

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Indian shooting legend Abhinav Bindra on Monday announced the end of his eight-year tenure as the vice-chair of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) athletes' commission.

The 43-year-old Bindra, who became India's first individual Olympic gold medallist at the 2008 Beijing Games, has been replaced by Kenyan rugby player Humphrey Kayange in the panel that was rejigged at the Winter Olympics in Italy.

"Serving athletes from across the world has been one of the most meaningful chapters of my journey in sport. To be entrusted with their voices, their concerns, their hopes and their dreams is a responsibility I have never taken lightly," Bindra wrote on social media.

Bindra. FILE PHOTO

"Every conversation, every decision, every moment at the table was guided by one simple belief that athletes must always remain at the centre of the Olympic Movement."

Describing his colleagues as extraordinary, Bindra said that each one of them tried to strengthen athlete representation and ensured their voices were heard and respected.

"I leave this role with deep pride in what we have built and with optimism for what lies ahead. The future of athlete representation is strong because it is driven by courageous, thoughtful and passionate individuals who believe in something larger than themselves," Bindra said.

ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಕೊಳ್ಳೇಗಾಲ

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಕೃಉಮಾಸ/ಕೊ/579/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 16–02–2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಸಮಿತಿಯ 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ ಕ್ರಿಯಾ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಅನುಮೋದಿತ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಪ್ರಾಂಗಣದ "ಎ" ಮತ್ತು "ಬಿ" ಬ್ಲಾಕ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಮೆಟಲಿಂಗ್ ಮತ್ತು ಮಣ್ಣು ರಸ್ತೆಯನ್ನು ಡಾಂಬರ್ ರಸ್ತೆಯನ್ನಾಗಿ ಪರಿವರ್ತಿಸುವ (ಐಟಂವಾರು ಟೆಂಡರ್) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ದ್ವಿ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಕಾಯಿದೆ 1999 ಮತ್ತು ನಿಯಮ 2000 ಹಾಗೂ ತತ್ಸಂಬಂಧವಾಗಿ ಹೊರಡಿಸಿರುವ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಆದೇಶ, ಸುತ್ತೋಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮಾರ್ಗಸೂಚಿಯನುಸಾರ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು Standard Tender Documents KW-3 Clause-3 (with latest amendments) ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಹರಿರುವ (ಸಿವಿಲ್) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಡಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಹಣ ಪಾವತಿ ವಿವರ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳಾಪಟ್ಟಿ : ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 50,82,400–83, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ರೂ. 1,01,700–00, ಪ್ರೀ ಬಿಡ್ ಮೀಟಿಂಗ್ ದಿನಾಂಕ 06–03–2026 11:00 am ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ 12–03–2026 4.00 pm ಮತ್ತು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 16–03–2026 11:00 am ಹಾಗೂ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 20–03–2026 11:00 am ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in//portal/portal-home ಮತ್ತು ಕಛೇರಿಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ
ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ. ಕೊಳ್ಳೇಗಾಲ

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿ
ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ. ಕೊಳ್ಳೇಗಾಲ

ಸಂ : ವಾಸಾಸಂ:ಇ:ಚಾನಗರ:730:2025–26

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Commissionerate of Agriculture,
Seshadri Road, Bengaluru – 560001
No.: DDA(F&M)/MNR/INM/e-RfP/2026-27 Date: 23.02.2026

e-REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RfP) NOTIFICATION

Technical and Financial Proposals are invited through GoK e-procurement portal from the registered Manufacturers/ Authorized distributors for Carrier based Bio-fertilizers, Liquid based Bio-fertilizers, VAM-Biofertilizer, Green Manure seeds (Diancha, Sunhemp & Pillipesara *(Phaseolus trilobus))*, Zinc sulphate (21% & 33%), Borax (10.5% & 14.5%), Ferrous sulphate (19%), Magnesium sulphate (9.5%), Micronutrient Mixtures, Gypsum, Agricultural Lime, Dolomite, Vermicompost, Organic Manure, Phosphate Rich Organic Manure, Potash Derived From Rhodophytes, Non-edible de-oiled Neem Cake and City Compost (Bulk & Packed Supply) required for various Departmental programmes for the year 2026-27. These Agricultural inputs are required for supply to farmers under different schemes of the Department.

REQUEST for PROPOSAL(RfP) document is available in the e-Procurement website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Suppliers must be accompanied by a Common Earnest Money Deposit (CEMD) for an amount of Rs.50,000/- which should be paid online through e-Procurement portal using any of the following payment modes: Credit Card-Visa or Master card, Debit card-Visa or Master card, Internet banking, and offline payments through Remittance at the Bank counter using challan, National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT/RTGS). The Applicant has to further submit a Performance Bank Guarantee as per the Technical Proposals submitted along with the Copy of the documents uploaded, one day before or on the day of opening of technical proposal to "Deputy Director of Agriculture (Fertilizer and Manure), Commissionerate of Agriculture, Sheshadri Road, Bengaluru".

Suppliers should upload the documents through e-Procurement website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or before 24.03.2026 within 05:00 P.M. The hard copies of the documents which are not uploaded online through e-procurement portal will not be accepted. The Proposal Scrutinizing Committee will open the Technical Proposal on 26.03.2026 at 11:00 A.M. at Samruddhi Conference Hall, Department of Agriculture, Sheshadri Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. The date of Financial Proposal opening will be communicated later. Estimated value of the RfP is approximately Rs. 9.02 Crore.

DIPR/CP/LC/5832/2025-26 **Sd/-, Director of Agriculture**

Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Kolar Division, Kolar-563101
e-mail: eepwdkolar07@gmail.com
website: www.kpwd.gov.in
e-portal: http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in
Phone No. 08152-222022

e-tender Notification – K.W.3&4 Short Term Tender notification No: 33/2025-26 Dt. 23.02.2026.

Tender is invited through e-Procurement for works in the limits of Bangarpete and Malur Taluk in Kolar District Public Works Department from the PWD Registered Contractors under **H/A: 4059-CMIDP Work & 8443- Deposit Contribution** Estimate cost : Min 70.00 Lakhs & Max: 200.00 Lakhs EMD Amount: mentioned in KPP Portal, Period for completion of work: 6 months.

Contractors may download the tender documents KW- 3&4 from Karnataka State Procurement portal **(viz., htpp://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** Filled in tenders shall be uploaded **on or before 16.00 hours. on 02.03.2026** through Karnataka State Procurement portal. Tenders received will be opened **after 16.30 hours on 03.03.2026** in KPP portal. Further details regarding the works and also for details about this tender notification please contact KPP portal and also you may contact this office during working hours.

Note: Any changes in this Notification will be published in KPP portal only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Kolar
DIPR/KOLAR/RO:508/KSMCA/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
(Procurement and Distribution Section)
8, Cunningham Road, 4th Floor, Sahakara Bhavan, Bengaluru-560052.
Website: www.ahara.kar.nic.in & www.neml.in
e-mail: indirafoodkit@gmail.com

No. 1/2025-26/ComFCS/IFK Date:23.02.2026

CORRIGENDUM-2

CORRIGENDUM FOR EXTENSION OF DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TECHNICAL BID FOR PROCUREMENT OF FOOD MATERIALS- TUR DAL, SUNFLOWER OIL, SUGAR AND IODIZED SALT UNDER ANNA BHAGYA SCHEME OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA THROUGH E-AUCTION.

The Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department, Bengaluru, Government of Karnataka with reference to the earlier notification regarding submission of documents for the INDIRA Ahara Kit published **on 23.01.2026,** it is informed to all concerned that the last date for the submission of Technical Bid has been extended. The date of submission of Technical Bids which was previously fixed as **23.02.2026 till 5:30 P.M.** has been extended to **02.03.2026 till 5:30 P.M.** The details of which will be uploaded in the website: **www.neml.in.**

For further information, if any, please contact NCDEX e Markets Ltd Toll-Free No. 1800-210-1222 or e-mail at **askus@neml.in.**

Sd/- Commissioner,
Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder
Call our toll-free number **1800 102 1878**
Or write to us at **customercare@thehindu.co.in**
Scan the QR code to register your feedback
THE HINDU · thehindu businessline · FRONTLINE · SPORTSTAR · The Hindu Young World · THE HINDU

भारतीय खाद्य निगम
Food Corporation of India
Regional Office, Bengaluru no. 10, East end main road, Jayanagar, Bengaluru - 560041 Email: gmka.fci@gov.in
RO KA-34.0025.0/2/2025-SLS-RO KA Date: 23.02.2026

NOTICE

The General Manager (Karnataka), Food Corporation of India, Regional Office, Bangalore invites applications from Small Private Traders for sale of Rice from FCI Depots, under Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic) under the following category.

Category	Reserve Price (Rs. Per qtl) PAN INDIA RATE From 01.11.2025 to 30.06.2026
Sale of Rice from FCI depots to Small Private Traders/Entrepreneurs/ Individuals	Rs. 2890/-

Small private Traders/ Entrepreneurs/Individuals with GST of Karnataka state may purchase **50 KGs to 9 MTs** of Rice stocks once per week at above fixed reserve price plus applicable taxes under OMSS (D) without participation in the e-auction.
Interested buyers can go through the instructions published in FCI website **www.fci.gov.in** and contact the concerned FCI Divisional offices for purchase of Rice from notified FCI depots.

General Manager (Karnataka)
FCI, Regional Office, Bangalore

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರ
ಉಪ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಕುದುರೆಮುಖ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರ್ಕಳ
ಫೋನ್: 08258–298183, Email: dcfwlkarkala@gmail.com
ಕ್ರ.ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಬಿ1:ಸಿಆರ್/01/ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/25–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 21.02.2026

ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕುದುರೆಮುಖ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಕಾರ್ಕಳ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ, ಕೆರೆಕಟ್ಟೆ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ, ಕುದುರೆಮುಖ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ, ಬೆಳ್ತಂಗಡಿ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ, ಸೋಮೇಶ್ವರ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ, ಹೆಬ್ರಿ, ಆಗುಂಬೆ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ, ಅಮಾಸೆಬೈಲು, ಸಿದ್ದಾಪುರ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕೊಲ್ಲೂರು ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿರುವ ಗಣಕಯಂತ್ರ ನಿರ್ವಾಹಕರು, ಬೇಟೆತಡೆ ಕಾವಲುಗಾರರು, ಕೇರ್ ಟೇಕರ್ ಇನ್ನಿತರ ಕಾವಲುಗಾರರು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರ 'ಡಿ' ಗ್ರೂಪ್ ನೌಕರರು ಇವರುಗಳ ಸೇವೆ ಅವಶ್ಯವಿದ್ದು, 2026–27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ವರ್ಷದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ 01.04.2026ರಿಂದ 31.03.2027ರವರೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮುಂದಿನ ಮೂರು ತಿಂಗಳವರೆಗೆ (ಅಂದರೆ 30.06.2027)ರವರೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮುಂದಿನ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಮುಗಿಯುವವರೆಗೆ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಸೇವಾ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅಂದರೆ, outsourcing ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆಯಲು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮೂಲಕ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಮೂನೆಗಳನ್ನು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ 21.02.2026ರಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿವರ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಷರತ್ತು ಸಂಬಂಧ ವಿವರ/ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 05.03.2026 ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ 09.03.2026 ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 2.30 ಗಂಟೆ. ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10.03.2026 ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 2.30 ಗಂಟೆ, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11.03.2026 ಪೂರ್ವಾಹ್ನ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆ. ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಉಪ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರ್ಕಳ ಇವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. (ಕಛೇರಿ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08258–298183)

ಸಹಿ/–, ಉಪ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರ್ಕಳ

BENGALURU EAST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer (M.P & C.S), Old Madras Road, K.R. Puram, Bengaluru - 560036.
No: BECC/PR/EE(MPCS)/10/2025-26 Date: 23-02-2026

CORRIGENDUM

Subject: Postponing of Tender.
Reference: **This Office Short Term Tender Notification No: BECC/PR/EE/MPSC/10/2025-26, Dated: 19-02-2026.**

This is for the kind information for Contractors / Bidders / Public that the Short Term Tender Notification published read at ref. is hereby **Postponed Due to Technical Reasons.** Hence New Calendar of Events is as follows.

Sl. No.	Earlier Calendar of Events	New Calendar of Events to be read
1	Downloading of Tender Documents: 23-02-2026	**Downloading of Tender Documents: 26-02-2026**
2	Pre Bid Meeting Date: 26-02-2026, 3.00 PM at Executive Engineer Office, K.R. Puram.	**Pre Bid Meeting Date: 02-03-2026, 3.00 PM at Executive Engineer Office, K.R. Puram.**
3	Last Date for Submitting of Tender Document: 02-03-2026 upto 4.00 PM	**Last Date for Submitting of Tender Document: 06-03-2026 upto 4.00 PM**
4	Technical Bid to be Opened on 03-03-2026 at 4.30 PM	**Technical Bid to be Opened on 07-03-2026 at 4.30 PM**

Other than this, everything is remained unaltered.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (MP & CS), BECC.

CLASSIFIEDS MART
TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
CALL: Bengaluru: 98455 29981 • 080-22071826
Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 • 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 • 2335700

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MADHUSUDANABABU R G, r/o No. 17, Kumbarahalli, Bangalore, have changed my name to Madhusudan Babu R G for all future purposes.

I, PAYAL JANGIR, D/o. Inder Pal, R/ at # 29, 1st Cross, Horamavu, Bangalore 43 have changed my name from PAYAL to PAYAL JANGIR for all my future purposes by affidavit 21–02–2026 sworn before notary B. Seshagiri.

I, Jyotirmayee Padhan, W/o Jayati Sahu R/o H.No 1, 2nd Flr, S-1 Bangalore - 560034. My Name is wrongly printed as "Jyotirmayee Sahu" in my daughter's Birth Certificate. The Correct name is "Jyotirmayee Padhan" as per affidavit sworn before the Court.

I, MOHAN Krishna Cerlopalli Srinivas, s/o; Audinarayana Sreenivasan Cherlopalli, r/o: A107, Pavani Park West Apt, Inner Circle Road, Dodsworth Layout, Whitefield, BLR – 560066. Have changed my name as Mohan Krishna Cherlopalli Sreenivasa.

I, Pooja Venkatesulu Adike, D/o Venkatesulu Adike, aged about 27 years, residing at G-003, Rajeshwari Sarvatraa, No. 321, 18th Cross, Ideal Homes Township, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore-560098, hereby change my name as Pooja V Adike vide affidavit dated 19-02-2026 duly sworn before notary, S.R. Thulasikrishna Bangalore.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, REVATHI Krishna Cerlopalli Mohan Krishna, w/o; Mohan Krishna Cherlopalli Sreenivasa, r/o: A107, Pavani Park West Apt, Inner Circle Road, Dodsworth Layout, Whitefield, BLR – 560066. Have changed my name as Revathi Krishna Cherlopalli Mohan Krishna.

I, SABA Zainab Hussain D/o Fazil Hussain residing at No. 3/2, Berlie Street Cross, Shanthi Nagar, Bengaluru-560025 Karnataka have changed my name to Saba Zainab Fazil vide affidavit dated 23/02/2026 before Meer Hassan Notary Bengaluru.

I, AZHAR Ali Azmath S/o Azmath Ali residing at No.12/2, Marappa Road, Next to National Academy School, Halasur Bengaluru-560008 Karnataka have changed my name to Azhar Ali vide affidavit dated 23/02/2026 before Meer Hassan Notary Bengaluru.

RENTAL

WAREHOUSE REQUIRED ON LEASE
Approximate 60k - 80k sqft and also another 2 - 3 lakh sqft with sufficient parking space & Open Area 40k sqft, max 30-35 kms from Majestic, Bangalore for immediate possession. Must have Fire Hydrants, Sprinklers, Fire NOC, Rental advance 3 months only. Brokers excuse.
8086151234, 7510400801

TVS

- PRESENTING THE ALL-NEW -

TVS RONIN

AGONDA EDITION

CUSTOM-INSPIRED R CUSTOM-INSPIRED

FROM THE SUN, SANDS AND SOUL OF GOA

STARTING FROM ₹1.25 L*

Ride #UnScripted

1800 315 7666

NEW COLOUR TONE | RAIN & URBAN ABS MODES | UPSIDE DOWN FRONT FORK

NO COST EMI** | LOW DOWN PAYMENT ₹11,999# | INSTANT CASHBACK UP TO ₹7,500**

SCAN TO KNOW MORE

#T&C apply. ##Finance will be at the sole discretion of financier. **Applicable on HDFC EasyEMI on credit card. #Finance schemes are mutually exclusive and cannot be clubbed with each other. *Ex-showroom price of Lightning Black (base variant) may change, depending on the location.

TVSCREDIT | HDFC BANK We understand your world | IDFC FIRST Bank ALWAYS YOU FIRST | TATA CAPITAL

FOR ALL INSTITUTIONAL/BULK REQUIREMENTS PLEASE MAIL corporate.customersupport@tvsmotor.com Authorized Main Dealers: **BANGALORE: Jayanagar:** Bharath TVS: 9364001954, 9538887036, **Rajajinagar:** Bridgestone TVS: 9036657247, **Nagarbhavi:** Global Autokraft: 76193 75566, **Mahalakshmi Layout:** Global Autokraft: 7619265566, **Basaveshwara Nagar:** Global Autokraft: 9606019180, **Kalyan Nagar:** PRN TVS: 9620000724, **Chamrajpet :** PRN TVS: 6366936912, **Domlur:** PRN TVS: 6366936931, **Bommasandra:** Bengaluru TVS: 6366258111, **Harlur:** Bengaluru TVS: 6366248111, **Banshankari:** Synergy TVS: 8792499451, **Bomanahalli:** Synergy TVS: 8792499454, **Kanakapura Road:** Dhancharan TVS: 9916183232, **Jalahalli Cross:** Prakruthi TVS: 9972365719, **Ganga Nagar:** Prakruthi TVS: 99723665791, **Bhadrappa Layout:** Prakruthi TVS: 9972363322, **Bommanahalli:** Arunagiri TVS: 9740995037, **HSR Layout:** Kubera TVS: 8904084251, **Sarjapur Road:** Indian TVS: 9980844993, **Kadubesanhalli:** Indian TVS: 9980844993, **Bannerghatta Road:** Neo TVS: 9620134664, **Tin Factory:** Dimple TVS: 8147117435/36, **Marathahalli:** Trijal TVS: 7349278333, **Whitefield:** Trijal TVS: 8971598119, **Yelahanka:** Hemanth TVS: 9740180379, **Vidyaranyapura:** Hemanth TVS: 9740180379, **Dodballapur:** Hemanth TVS: 9740180379, **Sahakarnagar:** Hemanth TVS: 9740180379, **Rajarajeshwari Nagar:** Solar TVS: 9148267949, **Kengeri:** Solar TVS: 9513777427, **Channasandra:** Solar TVS: 7337887814, **J P Nagar:** Solar TVS: 9513310624, **Hanumanth Nagar:** Solar TVS: 9148997405, **Kagallipura:** Solar TVS: 9035241869, **Krishnarajapuram:** Suryapratap TVS: 9513740009, **Thanisandra:** Suryapratap TVS: 9513740011 /9986716999, **Lalbag Road:** Himaalayaa TVS: 9513077787, **Koramanagala**: Flagship TVS: 9035154376, **BTM Layout:** Synergy TVS: 8792499453, **Maranahalli:** Synergy TVS: 8792499452, **BHEL- Mysore Raod:** Prakruthi TVS: 9606948590, **Attibele:** Balakrishna TVS: 9620851817, **Jigani:** Sri Balaji TVS: 9845762549, **Hoskote:** NithinTVS: 8123363849, **Nelamangala:** Prakruthi TVS: 7353770287, **Mahadevpura:** Vega TVS: 7618798890, **Kanakapura:** Anjanadri TVS: 9972130096, **Ramnagara:** Samarth TVS: 9513949993, **Channapatna:** Samarth TVS: 9513979997, **Ramamurthi Nagar:** Suryapratap TVS: 9513740006, **Ulsoor:** Suryapratap TVS: 9480811623, **Cox Town:** Suryapratap TVS: 9513373012, **Jeevan Bheema Nagar:** PRN TVS: 6366936879, **Vijayanagar:** RPM TVS: 9606077910, **E.City:** RPM TVS: 9696077904, **HBR layout:** Arunagiri TVS: 9035146677, **Kolar:** Saravana TVS: 9900403317, **K.G.F.:** Saravana TVS: 9900403317, **Chikballapur:** Maruthi TVS: 6360700285, **Kolar:** Sri Venu TVS: 9986833599, **Tumkur:** Sree Balaji TVS: 8971657342, Srigiri TVS: 8971657691, Vasista TVS: 8861025451, **Tiptur:** Nikitha TVS: 8971675903.

A BG-BGE